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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# An Examination of the Extent and Patterns of Marital Violence In Nonmetropolitan Alberta

by

Jo Ann Margaret Mackie

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Science

IN

Rural Sociology

Department of Rural Economy

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall, 1990

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(SIGNED) J. Ann Mackie

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

#2 443 12 St. NW

Calgary, AB

T2N 1Y9

DATED Oct 1 1990

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled An Examination of the Extent and Patterns of Marital Violence in Nonmetropolitan Alberta submitted by Jo Ann M. Mackie in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Rural Sociology.

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Professor D. G. Murri (Supervisor)

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Dr. W. Phillips

.....

Dr. J. Montgomery

.....

DATE .....

DEDICATION

The incentive to study this topic came from the pain and confusion of growing up in an abusing family. The strength to complete this project was gained from counsellors and friends who understand the healing process. This thesis is dedicated to those trapped in the cycle of violence and other dysfunctional life patterns, and to those who give their energy and support to breaking the hurtful cycles.

ABSTRACT

This research project contains an investigation of the extent and patterns of marital violence of couples in nonmetropolitan Alberta. This study contributes background knowledge for further study and treatment of this widespread social problem.

The sample and data on marital violence and selected socio-economic characteristics were extracted from the 1987 All Alberta Study conducted by the University of Alberta Population Research Laboratory. The extent of marital violence was measured as the percentage of nonmetropolitan couples who reported any act of violence, frequent acts of violence and wife abuse from responses to Straus' nine-item Conflict Tactics Scale of violent incidents. The patterns of violence were shown by the significant relationships between the three measures of marital violence (any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse) and the selected socio-economic variables (alcohol consumption, age, educational attainment, occupational status, household income, religious preference, community group membership, number of children and spousal differences in age, education, occupational status and religious preference). These relationships were then compared to twelve hypotheses derived from Gelles's Social Structural Theory of Violence, which describes his conclusion that "violence is a response to particular structural and situational stimuli" (1972, p. 188).

Marital violence was reported by 13% of respondents and by 20 - 30% of couples in some categories. The wife was the usual

victim in 67% of the violent couples. Seven significant relationships were found. Three supported Gelles's conclusions about marital violence's relationship to alcohol consumption, household income and religious differences. However, the relationships between marital violence and age, education, occupational status differences and number of children did not support Gelles's findings. This project provides no support for Gelles's conclusions and his Theory's first proposition, that marital violence is a response to particular structural and situational stimuli. Furthermore, this study suggests that marital violence, especially wife abuse, is widespread and that the strongest predictors of violence among couples are alcohol consumption, age, occupational status, household income, religious preference, spousal differences in religious preference, and family size. Suggestions are presented for further analysis of this issue in Alberta and on marital violence in general.

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Finally, I must thank my mother for teaching me to love life and seek an understanding of it.

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# CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

### A. INTRODUCTION

Wife battering, child abuse and other assaultive behaviour are examples of the violence in our society and homes. Marital violence appears to be a serious and widespread reality for many Canadians. Many wives, children, elders and husbands may be enduring physical or pyschological violence that if inflicted between strangers would result in legal charges and penalties, yet when committed by a family member, may be accepted or merely labelled as a domestic disturbance by police or the legal system. The violence is more than bruises and hurt feelings, it can be malicious torment and brutal beatings that lead to divorce, life-long misery or even death. This abuse has been hidden behind the walls of family privacy, unseen by friends or the community and underestimated by most government, health or social science professionals. Public and official awareness is growing and the shelter movement is maturing (Macleod, 1987), yet much needs to be done toward the alleviation of marital and other forms of family violence.

In Canada, women's shelters and social service agencies provide a range of services and programs for couples in violent relationships who live in major cities, but in small cities, towns and

rural areas these services are fewer or less accessible (Macleod, 1987). It is likely that rural women are entrapped in violent homes due to their reluctance to create a scandal in their small communities. The entrapment is intensified due to reduced accessibility to police and legal services, to public transportation, to social networks for support, and to employment options which might reduce their financial dependence (New Hampshire Committee Report, 1979). Victims of marital violence in nonmetropolitan areas are doubly isolated, first by the battering, and second, by geographic and cultural barriers of rural or small town life. The needs of this segment of couples are critical, yet attention from government agencies and social researchers has been minimal to non-existent.

In Canada, little research has been done on marital abuse among urban or rural couples. Two surveys were conducted in metropolitan Calgary and Toronto in 1981 and 1985 (Smith, 1987), respectively, but the writer found no studies of violence in nonmetropolitan couples in Canada. This topic has many possibilities for Canadian research. Due to the limited amount of research, there is little empirical support for the discussion of prevalence, causal theories or effective intervention techniques of marital violence in Canada. Research is needed to establish databases regarding the extent and patterns of marital violence, from which theories may be developed and tested, and intervention strategies evaluated. To begin to understand this issue, there is initially a need to develop background knowledge on the extent and patterns of marital violence among nonmetropolitan couples. In addition, this project tests twelve hypo theses drawn from a proposition from Gelles's theory on marital violence.

B. RESEARCH PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of this research project is to begin to understand marital violence in nonmetropolitan couples by examining the extent and patterns of marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta. Three objectives were proposed for this project:

1. To determine the extent of the reported marital violence, measured as the percent of couples who reported incidents of marital violence;

2. To identify the socio-economic patterns of marital violence through examination of the characteristics differentiating the violent from nonviolent individuals within nonmetropolitan couples.

3. To compare the research findings to those predicted by the selected theory on marital violence.

To facilitate this research project, the empirical and theoretical work of Gelles's 1972 study was utilized. Gelles' research on violent couples was the basis for his Social Structural Theory of Violence. His ground-breaking research and theory have been the basis of many studies on marital violence. Using Gelles's research as a model, comparable socio-economic variables were derived from a secondary data source, the All Alberta Study (AAS). Analysis of the relationships between the selected variables and the reports of marital violence could be compared to hypotheses derived from Gelles's study. Similarity to these hypotheses would provide support for his theory's ability to predict marital violence among nonmetropolitan couples in Alberta. The major objectives of this project are to

examine the extent and patterns of marital violence and to test twelve hypotheses derived from Gelles's 1972 study.

C. PROJECT LIMITATIONS

Research on sensitive personal issues is frequently limited by methodological concerns. People are reluctant to reveal information on personal, sexual, criminal or other private behaviours (Gelles, 1979) so researchers face many practical and methodological constraints which limit the reliability of the data and thereby the conclusions. The most important considerations for research on marital violence and other sensitive topics have been in sample selection, reliable data collection and generalizability of the results.

The sampling procedures varied between Gelles's work and this project. Gelles' respondents were from a non-probability sample from police and social agency reports, which limits direct comparison to his actual numerical results, ie. his high rates of violence across various socio-economic characteristics was due to the majority of his sample being drawn from reports on violent couples, although comparison will be made to the relationships presented in his report. This research project has utilized a random sample, drawn from all nonmetropolitan Albertans. The patterns of marital violence have been compared to hypotheses derived from Gelles's conclusions rather than his actual numerical results.

The reliability and validity of data is based on the effectiveness of the data gathering tool. Data collection is

especially difficult on sensitive topics. A discussion of the issue of reluctance to admit marital violence is followed by a description of the most commonly used data collection method in marital violence research, the Conflict Tactics Scale.

Respondents are reluctant to admit giving or receiving physical abuse. Underreporting on extremely sensitive topics is expected and may be explained by the respondent's need to provide socially acceptable answers, to avoid embarrassment or due to a perceived threat of legal or social sanctions (Gelles, 1972). Outright denial of abusiveness is especially common among the abusive men (Okun, 1985). Straus found that less violent acts may seem less significant or are not recalled, whereas more violent episodes may be underreported due to the "shame involved if one is the victim, or guilt if one is the attacker" (Straus, 1978, p. 447). Lower rates of reporting are expected from wives with higher education, economic or social status, "since middle class values may make wives reluctant to report existing abuse" (Stahly, 1978, p. 597). Concern for confidentiality in reporting illegal behaviour may be of concern to subjects (Gelles, 1979) therefore respondents may be less likely to report the more severe incidents of choking, threatening to or using a knife or gun by themselves or their spouse. Finally, underestimates of the rates of marital violence may also be due to the sample containing only couples who have cohabited in the past year, whereas extreme violence, a major contributor to divorce (Straus, 1978), has eliminated those couples from the sample. The underreporting of marital violence through reluctance, denial, shame, guilt, middle class values, concern for confidentiality and sampling of only present

couples will limit the accuracy of the results, and weaken the evidence on the extent and patterns of marital violence.

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), a nine-item list of incremental acts of physical violence, is commonly used to measure marital violence. The CTS was used in the AAS to elicit reports of physical acts of violence. The CTS was designed to address the problems of underreporting and has demonstrated refusal rates that are no higher than for telephone surveys in general (Straus, 1980), but it still has its limitations. To overcome the respondent's reluctance to admit to violence, the questions on marital violence (for exact wording see Appendix A) are introduced as conflict responses in normal relationships, and the types of violence are ordered in increasing severity, with the belief that it is easier to admit to more severe acts of violence after admitting to lesser types (Straus and Gelles, 1986).

The reliability and validity of the CTS have been shown through 15 years of study (Straus and Gelles, 1986). The validity of the CTS has been tested by comparisons to indepth interviews, such as Gelles (1972) and reports from other family members (Straus, 1974, Browning and Dutton, 1986). The CTS is limited in that ineffectual, harmless incidents are not differentiated from brutal, injurious attacks, therefore the understanding of marital violence is limited to a tally of violent incidents without knowledge of the context and severity of the violence (Gelles and Straus, 1979, Okun, 1985). Since this project has used only the CTS reports from the AAS data, the number and type of incidents of physical violence and not the context of the violence, such as who provoked or initiated the physical

violence, or the effects of the abuse, are omitted from this project. The CTS is a reliable index of types and frequency, but not of the substantive severity nor effects of the marital violence.

The structure of the survey is a source of limitations. The AAS questionaire covered over 18 topics, so the survey's length and range of topics may have reduced the amount of thought given by the respondent to the questions on marital violence. The wide range of topics might have a positive effect by reducing the emphasis on the marital violence questions thereby reducing the respondent's reluctance to report it. The section on marital violence follows a question to rate the "severity of harm ... of child abuse and of wife abuse" (AAS Codebook, 1987, p.26). This sequence of questions may have contributed to underreporting of one's own violence, after expressing opinions denouncing abuse, given the respondents' need for social acceptance. The AAS questionaire's length and ordering may have reduced the reliability of responses on marital violence whereas the general nature of the survey may have improved the reporting rate.

## D. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Several assumptions are underlying this research. Every act of marital violence recorded in the AAS data was considered significant in the absence of objective measures of severity or effect of the violent act. This is an important assumption which considers every reported act as equal although a slap with bodily injury may have caused more harm than a threat with a knife or gun. Severity and

effects of a violent act are not measured or discussed within this thesis as the emphasis has been placed on the extent and socio-economic patterns of violence rather than the nature of violent actions and violent marital relationships.

This project must also be based on the assumption that the respondents are accurately reporting the frequency and severity of their own and their partners actions. However, as mentioned previously, Gelles and Straus (1986) and others have found that sensitive issues such as marital violence are usually under-reported. Therefore this thesis reports the extent and patterns of marital violence based on reported acts of violence which are assumed to be a minimum rate of the violence among nonmetropolitan couples.

## E. PLAN OF THE THESIS

The first chapter contained an introduction to the problem, its significance and the need for Canadian research in this area. The basic assumptions, objectives and limitations of the research were discussed.

In the second chapter, the review of literature covers operational definitions, theoretical and empirical background of the topic. This chapter examines Gelles's Theory of Family Violence, in particular the conclusions from which he developed his first proposition within that theory.

Chapter Three contains a description of the research methodology, including a summary of the methods, procedures and sampling design used to gather the data. The discussion emphasizes

the methods of data analysis and the justification and limitations for these methods.

The results of the study are examined in the fourth chapter. A description of the extent and patterns of marital violence and a demographic profile of the sample couples is provided. The discussion of results draws a comparison to those hypothesized from Gelles's Theory. Tables of the detailed results are in Appendix C.

The final chapter discusses the conclusions and implications for the results. Suggestions for future research and applications of the findings are presented.

# CHAPTER II

## DEFINITIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Various approaches have been taken by past theoretical and empirical studies of marital violence. Theoretical perspectives affect the research design, and result in divergent solutions and recommendations for reducing marital violence. Differing opinions on what constitutes violence range from physical attacks to verbal, psychological and economic abuse. Marital violence has been viewed as part of society's general violence and malaise, not as a distinct phenomenon, by those who believe that it is the culturally accepted means to control women within a patriarchal society (Dobash and Dobash, 1978). Opinions differ on who the victims of the violence are. Some focus on the female partner, while others believe that battered husbands should also be studied as victims of abusive relationships (Steinmetz, 1978). Different perceptions have led to different definitions of the problem, the population affected and the research methods appropriate to the problem.

## A. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Literature on marital violence provided various concepts related to marital violence and to the focus population. This section examines the definitions of marital violence and the terms of reference for couple selection.

The concept of marital violence has been operationalized in general discussions and research studies in several ways, depending on which characteristics the authors wished to emphasize or on the limitations of a selected research methodology.

### Marital Violence

The words, abuse, assault, battering and violence have been used interchangeably in the literature but some authors have expressed the need for more clarity in discussions of marital violence. Kincaid suggests that the word 'abuse' implies that the action is a mis-use of authority over a subordinate such as elders, women or children (1985). Therefore the word 'abuse' has sexist or patronizing undertones (Kincaid, 1985) which is not appropriate to describe the violence between supposedly equal adults. 'Assault' may be the preferred term because, as Kincaid points out, 'assault' is more victim-oriented and legally defined (1985). Battering denotes the repetitious and damaging effects of the violence but implies only the physical acts of violence. The term 'violence' encompasses the physical attacks directed at persons or objects, for example, hitting a wall or destroying another's possessions. These connotations are important issues in the literature but this project has focussed on

the physical attacks, a more narrow view of marital violence selected due to the methodological limitations. Although for readability this report may use these terms interchangeably, and 'assault' may be the preferred term, the terms 'violence' and 'abuse' are used in this thesis for consistency with most of the literature.

In the studies discussed later in this chapter, researchers defined marital violence narrowly, to suit the limitations of a quantitative research project, or broadly, to encompass the various forms of violence experienced by couples.

Empirical studies that focussed on the physical aspects, have followed the lead of Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz who defined violence as

> an act carried out with the intention of, or perceived as having the intention of, physically hurting another person (1980, p.20).

Other writers have discussed the non-physical acts of marital violence. Non-physical aspects, such as emotional, verbal and sexual violence often accompany physical attacks (Roy, 1977). These may in and of themselves be the most frightening form of violence (Walker, 1979), especially if combined with threats of physical violence. Economic violence, such as preventing a spouse from maintaining employment or abusive control of their access to household or spending money, is increasingly recognized as an act which may severely restrict daily activities, re-inforce dependency, lower self-esteem and "can have serious ramifications for the safety and health of women and children" (Macleod, 1987, p.17). Deprivation of rights, interference with development (Pagelow, 1984), loss of

dignity and feelings of powerlessness (Macleod, 1987) are other types of non-physical violence, although the later two may be considered the result of violence rather than types of violence. In most empirical studies, the non-physical aspects may be mentioned or totally ignored, possibly due to the difficulty in operationalizing these aspects of marital violence.

The primary victim of the spousal violence is another contentious issue. Gelles (1972), Straus et al. (1980) and Hauser (1982) studied violence inflicted by either spouse. However they noted that frequent and severe violence is more commonly perpetrated by males. Steinmetz's discussion of battered husbands created a furor among policy makers, service deliverers and other professionals who felt that wide attention to a quantitatively minor victim group, ie. battered husbands, could dangerously obscure the greater costs and consequences born by female victims (Pleck et al. 1978). Most studies show that women are predominantly or exclusively the victim (Martin, 1976; Dobash and Dobash, 1978; Macleod, 1980; Walker, 1983; Fagan, 1983) or that the violence may be mutual but the female is more likely to suffer worse consequences due to inequalities in her social, economic and physical resources (Macleod, 1987). Most studies of marital violence consider that the primary victims are the wives.

Two additional elements of violence are important for an understanding of marital violence. Macleod (1987) and Walker (1983) stressed that the repetition or persistence of the violence reinforces the horror and helplessness inflicted on the victim. Secondly, the violence is not sanctioned by the victim (Steinmetz,

1977; Walker, 1979; Macleod, 1980) as opposed to viewing female victims as willing participants, masochists or deserving of abuse. The persistence and unsanctioned nature of marital violence are important to an understanding of this behaviour.

Combining these elements, marital violence can be defined as unsanctioned and repetitious physical, emotional, verbal, economic or sexual acts or threats which by their ommission or commission have the intention to cause injury or deprivation, predominantly or exclusively toward a female partner. Although this synthesized definition is a thorough view of marital violence, operationalization of the many elements has been difficult for researchers. Operational definitions, such as that used by Gelles, are frequently limited to physical acts committed or threatened to be committed (1972). Since one of the research objectives is a comparison to Gelles's study, this project has been confined to studying the physical acts of violence.

In the literature, 'spouse abuse', 'domestic violence', 'conjugal violence' have been used interchangeably with 'marital violence' but this later term is predominant in this report. In discussions of one-way violence, 'wife abuse', 'husband abuse', and 'wife battering' may be substituted for terms describing two-way violence. For 'violence', the words 'abuse', 'assault', 'battering', or 'beating' may be used.

## Couple Selection

The definition of 'couple' has implications for the sample selection and for the results obtained. Gelles (1972), Hauser (1982)

and Steinmetz (1981) sampled only legally married couples, whereas others have included common-law couples (Straus et al., 1980; Fagan, 1983; Kincaid, 1985 and Smith, 1987) thereby recognizing that lack of a marriage license does not preclude the 'license to hit'. In fact, cohabitors may have a higher rate of any or severe violence than married couples (Pagelow, 1984). Dating couples have also been found to be violent (Pagelow, 1984), but this research will only include those who have established cohabitation, ie. they have stated that they are legally married or have lived common-law in the past year.

## B. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Similar to conceptual perspectives, theoretical viewpoints of marital violence also vary. Theories on family violence have been developed from the various theories of social behaviour, ranging from psychological to socio-cultural perspectives. Since neither academicians nor practitioners agree on the main causes or processes of family violence, they have different approaches for studying and resolving marital violence. An adequate theory of marital violence could provide a description of this human behaviour, as well as facilitating explanation and prediction. It could also provide linkages to broader macro- or mid-range sociological theories. An adequate theory can also have direct implications for policy formulation, research methodology, intervention techniques and service delivery. Therefore, it is important to be able to identify and compare the many theoretical perspectives within the family violence field.

Theories of marital violence may be categorized in several ways, such as by level of analysis or by the purported causes. This review of theoretical perspectives has used level of analysis, as this method most clearly reveals the methodological, etiological and pragmatic characteristics of each theory. The levels of analysis, individual, family, socio-structural and socio-cultural, are not exclusive categories, but merely a heuristic device for comparative purposes (summarized in Table 1). The authors have been categorized in this review by either direct statements of their theoretical perspective or, indirectly by their discussions of the causes or processes of marital violence. Although some authors may overlap into several categories, they have been assigned to the one which most generally reflects their theoretical perspective. Those authors who did not reveal obvious opinions on causality were not categorized, despite possible extrapolations that could have been made from their methodology or points of emphasis.

## Individual Level

Many of the earliest theorists examined family violence from an individual level. Individual factors, such as alcohol usage, mental illness, male aggression or tormenting wives were thought to cause men to beat their wives (Macleod, 1980). Fagan (1983) and Walker (1979) stressed the role of childhood exposure to violence in abusive homes, which resulted in increased acceptance of physical abuse as a normal pattern of married behaviour. From Bandura's Social Learning Theory, violence was explained as a learned behaviour in which physical force was reinforced as an appropriate response to

situational stimuli, such as anger, frustration or conflict (Stahly, 1978). The Freudian perspective viewed violence as one response to the frustation-aggression state, in which violence could be cathartic or necessary (Stahly, 1978). These theories describe violence as psycho-pathological disorders, implying that they are social anomalies which might be removed by solving the problems of the abuser or the victim (Macleod, 1980).

Family Level

From the couple or family level of analysis, violence theories have examined the roles, behaviours and dynamics of the relationship between the husband and wife, or among all family members. Roy (1977), Steinmetz (1977), Farrington (1980) and Flanzer (1982) explained marital violence as a couple's reaction to problems or conflict, as a mechanism to cope with stress. Bloch added that we may all be holders of this response set and that the main issue is to determine the "characteristics of families that lie at the extreme end of the violence proneness" (1980, p.34) and to develop strategies to reduce violence proneness. Although these theories may acknowledge the influence of individual, socio-structural or socio-cultural factors, their explanations focus on the spousal relationship.

Socio-structural Level

By analyzing the social structure and processes, some authors have theorized that marital violence is a reflection of the socio-structural inequalities in the economy, community, service

policies, legal system and world of work (Carlson, 1984). Goode's Resource Theory of Violence explains physical force as one of the primary resources for stability maintenance when "social-structural or interpersonal process variables" (Stahly, 1978, p.593) threaten the interests or needs of the family, especially those of the dominant authority figure (Rounsaville, 1978). Unemployment and other economic factors have been claimed by some as contributing to marital violence "through the stress and tension created by insufficient material resources" (Carlson, 1984, p.577). Many social institutions underestimate their role in contributing to or resolving domestic conflict. For example, in his study of police response to domestic violence in rural Ohio, Bell found that police agencies "inappropriately regarded domestic dispute and violence incidents as private family affairs" (1985, p.21). One report summarized that psychological factors may trigger abusers to use physical tactics to resolve conflict, but external factors, such as inadequate social services, legal options, transportation or employment opportunities "serve to keep the woman in the violent situation" (New Hampshire Advisory Committee, 1979, p.5). These theories have focussed on elements of the social structure to provide causal explanations for marital violence.

Major theoretical and empirical contributions have been made by Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz. Gelles proposed that structural stresses within and around the family, as well as situational and experiential factors created marital conflict, and therefore contributed to marital violence (1974). In a General Systems Theory, Straus and Steinmetz have integrated family variables

(family organization, its position in the social structure and its values), individual factors (personality, psycho-pathological traits and occupational roles), societal values (opportunity structure, societal violence and social setting) and precipitating factors (problems and stress). They examined the interaction of these variables upon family violence and considered the consequences for the family and for society (1974). They explained marital violence as a "continuing element in and a systematic product of the social interaction of the family" (1978, p.595) and considered the interrelationship of societal structure and family organization in positive or negative feedback cycles during a family's attempts at goal-seeking, stress management and problem resolution (Stahly, 1978).

Socio-cultural Level

In the final category, socio-cultural characteristics have been used to analyse marital violence. These macro-level theories assume that the roots of violence are in society's values, beliefs and norms (Gaguin, 1978; Straus, et al., 1980; Thorman, 1980; Flanzer, 1982; Kincaid, 1985; Sonkin, 1985). Dobash and Dobash described the influence of social processes and institutions which have developed a culture of violence in which wives are the appropriate victim of violence (1978). This level of analysis links marital violence theory to macro-level theories of social change.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES BY LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

| AUTHOR | ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MARITAL VIOLENCE | VICTIM |
|---|---|---|
| *Individual Level* | | |
| Freud | Frustration-aggression response. | Either |
| Bandura | Learned behaviour. | |
| Fagan | Individual's response to stress. | Wife |
| Walker | Alcohol, stress, lack of self-esteem contribute to cycle of violence. | |
| *Family Level* | | |
| Roy<br>Steinmetz<br>Flanzer | Conflict from stress between couple. | Either |
| Bloch | Degree of violence proneness universal. | |
| *Socio-Structural Level* | | |
| Carlson | Family unit potentially stressful. | Either |
| Goode | Power & stability maintenance resource. | |
| Gelles | Response to family and societal stress. | Wife |
| Straus, et al | Stress, societal change create conflict and a pattern of violence in marriage. | Either |
| *Socio-Cultural Level* | | |
| Gaguin<br>Thorman<br>Flanzer<br>Kincaid<br>Sonkin<br>Dobash & Dobash | Arises from societal values, norms and educational practices. | Wife |

## C. EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND

Empirical studies of marital violence are just beginning to develop the databases necessary to provide a foundation for this interdisciplinary topic. Researchers from various disciplines have used and adapted numerous research tools to gather quantitative and qualitative data on marital violence.

### Sample Variations in Research

As in other scientific research, a key methodological concern is to obtain a representative sample which allows generalization of the conclusion to the total population (Babbie, 1979). Many empirical studies of marital violence have relied on non-probability samples from police files, women's shelter records and social agency reports whereas the few surveys with random samples have more generalizable results.

Access to an adequately sized sample has led some researchers such as Gelles to rely on selective reports or files. Gelles (1972) used a non-probability sample because he thought that it would be too difficult to identify and reach violent couples from the general population. Since Gelles thought that marital violence was rare, he selected families from social work agencies and police records. His comparison group for these families were the systematically selected neighbouring families of the 'violent families'. Gelles acknowledged the bias in his sampling technique which had also resulted in "predominantly female respondents" (1972, p.215) from low and lower-middle-class families.

Other research has similarily relied on non-probability samples and their conclusions should be noted as a reflection of that biased sample. Dobash and Dobash (1978) and Bell (1985) used couples from police reports. Dobash and Dobash also sampled women from shelters (1978), as did Roy (1977), Kincaid (1985) and Walker (1983). Walker supplemented a shelter sample with battered women in prison (1983). Okin sampled women in shelters and men in batterers counselling programs (1986). Kincaid also gathered data on women from court cases (1985). Women in psychiatric programs in a hospital were interviewed by Rounsaville (1978). Walker used a self-volunteered sample of battered women (1979). Married female college students comprised the sample for Hauser's research (1982). Two studies indirectly sampled battered women through shelter workers' reports of shelter users (Macleod, 1980 & 1987) and battering husbands through reports by their wives who were in shelters or counselling programs (Fagan, 1983). Data from these clinical or quasi-clinical samples may not be generalizable beyond that subgroup due to the intervening variables which may characterize those in shelters, police reports, prisons, counselling programs, colleges or court cases (Okun, 1986). Despite these limitations through sampling bias, results of these studies have provided major contributions to the understanding of marital violence.

Few research projects have obtained probability samples that are representative of couple populations. Straus et al. (1980) and Gaguin (1978) used data from the first national probability sample, the 1976 National Crime Survey (NCS), which included married or cohabiting couples in intact families (Straus et al., 1980).

Steinmetz used randomly selected couples of intact families of one American region (1977). Smith's probability sample contained currently and formerly married or cohabiting women of Toronto (1987). The 1985 NCS, a second national sample (Gelles and Straus, 1986) was a major break from one-shot data gathering and has provided a basis for comparative analysis of the issue. Although these samples may be more representative of the total population, a sampling bias may still exist in probability samples if only 'intact' families are surveyed. Marital violence is a common factor leading to divorce or separation, yet the battering may continue (Okun, 1986). For this reason, both currently and formerly cohabiting couples should be considered in studies of marital violence.

Methodology Variations

The most common data collection method employed by family violence researchers has been a survey. Studies using direct observation of sensitive family issues are "time-consuming, expensive and rare" (Gelles, 1979, p.417). Personal interviews with structured or unstructured questions are the most frequently used survey instrument (Roy, 1977; Steinmetz, 1977; Gaquin, 1978; Rounsaville, 1978; Fagan, 1983; Walker, 1983). Gelles used an unstructured, funnel-type of questioning (1972) which Straus later standardized into the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Gelles, 1979).

The CTS was designed to guide the respondent to report own or spouse's past methods of 'conflict resolution', from mild verbal tactics through increasingly severe physical acts (Gelles, 1979). The CTS, used in the 1975 NCS personal interviews and 1985 NCS

telephone survey (Straus and Gelles, 1986), has "internal consistency, reliability, concurrent validity, and construct validity" (Straus and Gelles, 1986, p.476). Although Barling et al argue that the CTS's construct validity and generalizability could be improved by incorporating only the physical aggression items, and the general reliability and validity improved by using the averaged ratings of responses from both partners, rather than only one partner (1987). To further reduce reluctance to admit violence, Smith used supplemental probing questions with the CTS in a structured telephone survey (1987).

Primary data and survey research on sensitive family issues have limitations. Telephone interviews may be affected by respondents' embarassment, reluctance or need to give socially accepted responses, and by the interviewers' ability to develop rapport, trust and express impartiality (Gelles, 1979). In personal interviews, these problems may be amplified. The level of analysis in most marital violence research has been the individual. Although conjoint interviews would have improved reliability, they have sometimes created disagreement and conflict during the interview (Gelles, 1979).

Some researchers have used secondary data sources. Dobash and Dobash gathered data from police reports of domestic violence to supplement their interview data (1978). Macleod analyzed shelter reports and surveyed shelter staff (1980). Kincaid supplemented data from police reports and shelter records with shelter staff interviews and self-administered questionaires of battered women (1985). Bell (1985) and Berk (1983) also relied on police reports of domestic

disturbances. Secondary data sources, such as police, legal or shelter records, which were gathered for different purposes, may have been dependent on the third party's perception of the situation, and may have been dependent on time available to police officers or shelter workers for complete and accurate reporting (Gelles, 1979). Secondary data research on marital violence may have limited validity and reliability.

## Canadian Studies

Two city-wide surveys have been done in Canada. Using the CTS, Brinkerhoff and Lupri surveyed a random sample of Calgarians in 1981. In this face-to-face interview, husbands reported on their violence toward their wives. The incidence rate for husband-to-wife abuse was 24.5% and 10.8% for severe violence (Smith, 1987).

A telephone survey of Toronto women was conducted in 1985. Open-ended questions and a version of the CTS were used to ask women about abuse from their husbands, boyfriends, dates or other male partners. The study reported rates of abuse in past year (10.8%), ever abused (18%) and severe abuse (7.3%) (Smith, 1987).

The most prominent Canadian studies on marital violence are by Macleod. She reported that a rate of violence in 1980 as 1 in 10 women (Macleod, 1980) and in 1987 increased this rate to 1 in 8 women (Macleod, 1987). While her conclusions are based on non-random samples of women in shelters and included non-physical abuse (Smith, 1987), these rates are similar to those reported by Straus et al. (1986) from their American national surveys of 1975 and 1985.

In a preliminary examination of the All Alberta Survey

data, Kennedy and Dutton compared the Alberta rates of wife abuse to those in the US. Their analysis revealed several demographic patterns among violent couples (1987). In comparison to Straus et al. who found rates of 16% of couples experiencing marital violence from their 1975 and 1985 national surveys, Kennedy and Dutton reported that Alberta rates of wife assault are similar although lower rates were found for the severe forms of wife assault. The highest rates of violence can be found among separated, single, or divorced people, among young adults (18-34 years) especially those in school, and for those with lower income (less than $6000 household income). They also reported that "the high level of abuse (is occurring) in a climate of non-involvement by others" (Kennedy and Dutton, 1987, p.32).

Studies of marital violence have been conceptually, theoretically and empirically diverse. Studies of physical violence reported by shelter residents are difficult to compare to discussions of the broader scope of marital violence experienced by couples in the general population. It is difficult to compare the rates and patterns of violence determined from police reports to those of national surveys. This diversity of concept, theory and methodology which cloud an understanding of marital violence, arise from the various perspectives of society, social change and the nature of humankind.

## D. REVIEW OF GELLES'S RESEARCH

Gelles's 1972 study of violence in American homes was a milestone in marital violence research and theory. He applied a socio-structural view of violence to his study of the physical tactics used by reported violent couples. Gelles's study and theory are not the most current available but in the writer's opinion, they are representative of other research which includes analysis of a family's situational and structural variables in relation to the incidence of marital violence.

Empirical studies were scarce and methodology untried when Gelles proposed a study of the physical violence between husbands and wives. "At the time ..., physical violence between husband and wife was thought to be infrequent" (Gelles, 1972, p.33), Gelles thought that a random sample would not provide enough violent families to permit statistical analysis so he used a focussed sample from two New Hampshire cities' social service and police reports. These known or suspected violent couples were interviewed using a funneling technique of questions, as were the comparsion group of systematically selected neighbours to these 'known' families. From the mostly female respondents' discussion of the violent episodes in their marriage, Gelles developed a description of the nature, extent and patterns of violence, how these may be related to the family's life and situation, interactions prior to attacks, and childhood experiences of violence.

Gelles's research provided data on many aspects of violence in homes. Relevant to this project are his results on the extent and

frequency of marital violence in relation to selected socio-structural and socio-demographic characteristics. In summary, he found that several socio-structural and other stress-inducing variables were closely associated with high rates of any violence and frequent violence. A direct relationship existed between alcohol consumption by husbands and violence between the spouses. Violence occurred in all age groups but more frequent (from monthly to daily) violence occurred in the middle ages (31-50 year olds). The relationship between any violence and education was generally inverse for all male and female education levels, except for wives "who are college graduates" (p.123), and for frequent violence, it is an inverse relationship, except for male and female college graduates. Men with high occupational status were reported to be less violent and less involved in frequent violence, whereas wives with high occupational status experienced more frequent violence than wives of other occupational status levels. Families in the highest income groups reported less violence and less frequent violence than did the lower income families. In examining within-family status differentials, Gelles found that men with lower or similar achieved status (though education or occupation) in comparison to their wives, were among the more violent and more frequently violent couples, while men with lower ascribed status (younger than wife) are less likely to be violent or frequently violent. In examining religious affiliation, Gelles found little significant difference, except "the generally higher level of violence in families where one or both of the spouses is an agnostic, atheist or has no religion" (p.127), although couples with different religious affiliations were more

likely to be violent than those with the same affiliation. Social isolation from neighbours and community was noted to be a common characteristic of violent couples. Family size had little affect on spousal violence (although families with more children experience more child abuse). Gelles categorized his findings as situational factors, social and family structural stresses, family structure variables and (within family) structural stresses.

From these findings, Gelles determined that marital violence is more common among families whose socio-structural position and intra-family structure may have been weak or imbalanced. Individuals in these families having fewer resources or skills yet suffering greater stress, would resort to violence to cope with the stress. Using this evidence and other theories of violence, Gelles outlined five propositions in his Social Structural Theory of Violence:

1. Violence is a response to particular structural and situational stimuli.
2. Stress is differentially distributed in social structures.
3. Exposure to and experience with violence as a child teaches the child that violence is a response to structural and situational stimuli.
4. Individuals in different social positions are differentially exposed both to learning situations of violence as a child and to structural and situational stimuli for which violence is a response as an adult.
5. Individuals will use violence towards family members

differently as a result of learning experience and structural causal factors that lead to violence. (1972, p.188-189)

The first proposition was developed from his findings on situational, structural and family stressors. From these results, twelve hypotheses have been derived (see Table 2). This research project tests each hypothesis with data from the All Alberta Study to determine the strength of that proposition in predicting marital violence among nonmetropolitan couples.

TABLE 2 RESULTS HYPOTHESIZED FROM GELLES'S STUDY

Situational Factors

1. Marital violence is directly related to alcohol consumption.

Social and Family Structure

2. Marital violence increases to middle age, then declines.
3. Marital violence declines with level of education, except for wives with University or more education.
4. Marital violence declines with occupational status, except for wives with Professional/Managerial status.
5. Marital violence declines with household income.
6. Marital violence is highest among those with no religion and is unrelated to Catholic or Protestant preference.
7. Marital violence increases with social isolation, ie., decreases with group membership.

Family Structure

8. Marital violence higher if husband is less educated than wife.
9. Marital violence higher if husband has less occupational status than wife.
10. Marital violence lower if wife is older than husband.

Structural Stresses within the Family

11. Marital violence is not related to the number of children in the family.
12. Marital violence is higher if couple has different religious preferences.

# CHAPTER III

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. METHOD AND PROCEDURE

This project examined the socio-economic factors related to marital violence among nonmetropolitan couples surveyed in the 1987 All Alberta Study (AAS). To determine the extent and patterns of marital violence and to test the hypothesized results, this project developed a profile of the nonmetropolitan couples. Twelve socio-economic characteristics were examined to determine their relationship to several measures of marital violence. The findings regarding the relationships of the twelve socio-economic characteristics to marital violence indicate the predictive strength of the first proposition in his Social Structural Theory of Violence.

This section describes the methods used for defining the sample, selecting the variables, collecting and analyzing the data. The sample couples and relevant variables were extracted from the AAS data. The sampling and data collection methods used for the AAS data and Gelles's study differed and the implications are discussed. Results from the analysis of the AAS data were arranged to allow comparison to hypotheses drawn from Gelles's study.

B. ALL ALBERTA STUDY AND PROJECT SAMPLE

The AAS was planned and conducted by the Population Research Laboratory of the University of Alberta in 1987. That year's annual survey included telephone interviews of an all Alberta sample, as well as the usual inperson interviews in the City of Edmonton. The survey contained questions on areas of specific interest to various researchers at the University and outside agencies. The nonmetropolitan respondents were only surveyed by telephone so further discussion of methodology will only refer to that portion of the 1987 AAS.

The survey's sampling design defined the sample population and the geographic areas. The sample for the AAS was to represent the total population of Alberta. This was further subdivided into three areas: the City of Edmonton, City of Calgary and Other Alberta. Since the 'Other Alberta' area contains no metropolitan areas, the nonmetropolitan couples for this project were drawn from this segment of respondents.

The two stage selection process for the AAS telephone interviews provided a probability sample of adult residents of Alberta. To select the respondent, the household was first selected. A computer-generated random sample (10 percent sample of possible residential telephone numbers) was extracted from Alberta Government Telephone directories. From the original list of 858 telephone numbers, the nonresident, ineligible, and vacant numbers were removed leaving a sample of 430. Then to select the actual respondent and attain a balance of males and females, interviewers were instructed

to ask for an adult male (over 18 years of age) willing to respond, or if not, a willing adult female was interviewed. This procedure was used because "adult males are generally more difficult to contact" (Kinzel, 1987, p.6) reducing the representativeness of the sample. The Other Alberta sample contained an equal number of male and female respondents (49.3% and 50.7%, respectively). The completed interviews totalled 347 which represents .03% of Alberta's nonmetropolitan population. (Using Alberta's nonmetropolitan total population as 1,155,739, from 1986 Census data.) (Kinzel, 1987, P.8).

This research project required a sample of nonmetropolitan couples. First the control program selected the nonmetropolitan respondents, ie. eliminating the Calgary and Edmonton residents. From these 347 respondents, the control program selected only those who were part of a couple in that year. Those who were presently married or living common-law, and those who were single, divorced, separated or widowed but had been living with their partner in the past year were selected as the couples. Ninety-two respondents were eliminated from the sample as they reported that they had not lived with a spouse or partner in the past year. This resulted in 255 respondents that could be identified as nonmetropolitan couples.

Nonmetropolitan Alberta

The subjects in this research are from the cities, towns and rural areas of nonmetropolitan Alberta. Only Calgary and Edmonton are excluded from the sample as they are the only two Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA), ie. having populations above 100,000 (Statistics Canada, 1987). Three other divisions of community size

were used in the data collection and the discussion. A Census Agglomeration (CA) is a medium-sized city with adjacent rural fringe (population between 10,000 and 99,999). Outside CMA's and CA's are Urban Areas which include small cities and towns with adjacent rural fringes (population between 1,000 and 9,999). Rural Areas include farm and non-farm residents (population under 1000). Alberta's nonmetropolitan area includes cities, towns, villages and rural areas. Therefore the sample includes both rural and urban residents, defined as residents of a Census Agglomeration, Urban Areas or Rural Areas.

## C. AAS QUESTIONAIRE AND DATA PREPARATION

The All Alberta Study collected data using a telephone interview of the nonmetropolitan sample. The telephone questionaire which was half as long as the inperson interview, contained questions on various issues such as, driving habits, legalization of abortions, Alberta's economy, crime, seatbelt legislation, labour issues, ethnic identity, and financial situation, as well as the marital violence questions. The survey also included general socio-economic questions such as the respondent's gender, number of children, marital status, and household income, and asked for the age, education, occupation and religion of both respondent and partner. The pretest was done on Edmonton residents.

The AAS questionaire's section on marital violence used the nine item Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) developed by Straus. Following a brief introductory statement about marital violence, the

respondent was first asked to report the number of incidents that he or she had:

thrown something,

pushed grabbed or shoved,

slapped,

kicked, bit or hit with a fist,

hit or tried to hit with something,

beat,

choked,

threatened with a knife or gun, or

used a knife or fired a gun

on their partner in the last 12 months. Using the same list of items, they were then asked to report the number of incidents done by the partner to the respondent. The responses were recorded as the number of times reported for each item (see Appendix A for exact wording of questions). The number of reported incidents was the basis for the measures of marital violence among the couples.

Experienced telephone interviewers completed the data collection in January, 1987. The interviewers made up to 10 callbacks to complete an interview. They worked 9 am to 9 pm, seven days per week. Completed interviews totalled 347 of the original sample of 430 (Kinzel, 1987).

The data was coded, cleaned and input in accordance with accepted research practices using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSSx). A data codebook was provided by the Population Research Laboratory as a reference for the variable numbers and answer codes. The data was put on magnetic tape and made available

for public access in November, 1987. Although the data was weighted to compensate for the over-sampling of Edmonton (Kinzel, 1987), the unweighted data was used for this project.

## D. PROJECT VARIABLES

This research project required a measure of the extent of marital violence and its patterns. The measures of marital violence, the dependent variable, were selected to represent various aspects of marital violence and allow comparison to the hypothesized results derived from Gelles's study. To determine the patterns of marital violence, the data was analysed to identify significant relationships between the measures of marital violence and the selected characteristics of the sample population.

The first step was to identify the variables from the AAS data which could be compared to Gelles's study. The AAS contained data on socio-economic characteristics of Albertans as well as their responses to questions on marital violence. The reported incidents of violence were regrouped to represent several measures of marital violence, the dependent variable. For the independent variables of the socioeconomic factors, only those variables which resembled those characteristics used by Gelles were extracted from the AAS data. Secondly, the responses were recoded to resemble Gelles' categories within each variable.

Using the responses of those who reported inflicting or receiving violence, three measures of the extent of violence were constructed. The extent of marital violence among nonmetropolitan

TABLE 3
GELLES'S AND PROJECT'S TWELVE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

| GELLES'S STUDY | PROJECT'S VARIABLES |
|---|---|
| **Situational Factors** | |
| Alcohol discussed in general terms without data. | Drinking frequency (Never-Very)<br>Consumption (Light to Heavy) |
| **Social and Family Structure** | |
| Age - four categories by sex | Age - same categories |
| Educational attainment | Educational attainment |
| Grammar school | None to Elementary |
| Some high school | Junior to some high school |
| High school graduate | High school graduate |
| Some college | Non-university (college, technical, nursing or incomplete university) |
| College graduate | University (completed diploma, bachelor, masters or doctorate) |
| Occupational status | (same categories) |
| Unemployed, keeping house | |
| Low, Medium, High Status | |
| Professional/Managerial Status | |
| Household Income | Household Income |
| Under $3000 | Under $16000 |
| $3000 - 4999 | $16000 - 25999 |
| $5000 - 6999 | $26000 - 35999 |
| $7000 - 9999 | $36000 - 49999 |
| $10000 - 14999 | $50000 - 64999 |
| $15000 & over | $65000 & over |
| Religion - No Preference | (same categories) |
| Catholic | |
| Protestant and Other | |
| Social isolation - discussed generally without data. | Group Memberships<br>None, 1, 2, 3 or more |
| **Family Structure** | |
| Educational Differences | (same categories) |
| Husband more, Same, Wife more | |
| Occupational Differences | (same categories) |
| Husband more, Same, Wife more | |
| Age Differences | (same categories) |
| Husband older, Same, Wife Older | |
| **Structural Stresses within the Family** | |
| Number of Children | Number of Children |
| None to two | None |
| Three to four | One |
| Five or more | Two |
| | Three or more |
| Religious Differences | (same categories) |
| Same or Different | |

couples was determined by the percentage of those who reported:

1. any violence,
2. frequent violence, and
3. wife abuse.

'Any violence' was used to indicate the report of one or more of any of the CTS types of violence in that past year. 'Frequent violence' was defined in the same manner as did Gelles, as more than six incidents per year. 'Wife abuse' was the report of only the husband's violence toward the wife as reported by either the husband or wife. The first three of these measures of marital violence are similar to Gelles's study and the fourth measure is suggested by his discussion of the one-sideness of most of the violence (Gelles, 1972).

The AAS telephone survey included data on many of the particular and general socio-economic variables used by Gelles. The independent variables drawn from the AAS data, resembled Gelles's situational factors (alcohol consumption), social and family structure characteristics (age, education, occupation, income, religion, and social isolation), family structure factors (differences in education, occupation and age between husband and wife), and the structural stresses within the family (number of children and couples' religious differences). These twelve items, the independent variables, are summarized in Table 3.

The situational factors of alcohol consumption were described by Gelles in general terms without detailed data presentation. He reported that alcohol was a factor in the violence of 48% of the couples, and that there was a high association between

alcohol and marital violence (1972). Since no precise variables and statistics were provided in his report, the responses on alcohol consumption required regrouping only as was necessary to allow general comparison. The frequency of consumption was categorized as never, occasional (less than one day per month), infrequent (one to three days per month), frequent (one to two days per week) and very frequent (three to four days per week). The amount of alcohol consumed per drinking session was categorized as very light (one drink), light (two drinks), moderate (three drinks) and heavy (four or more drinks).

Age, education, occupation, income, religion and social isolation are all factors which Gelles used to measure social and family structural stresses (see Appendix B for categorization details on education, occupational status, and religion). The ages of respondent and spouse were regrouped by gender into four age categories, identical to Gelles's age groupings, with the exception of the respondent with a 17 year old wife. Educational attainment was also separated by gender of respondent and spouse, and then grouped into five levels of 'education completed' categorized identical to Gelles except the technical school graduates were placed in the 'Non University' category and university postgraduates were put in the 'University' category. These educational levels, not directly specified in Gelles, were grouped in this study by the similarity in years required to complete these levels.

Occupational status was separated by gender and then regrouped into five categories most similarily representing Gelles's categories of unemployed, low, medium, high and professional/manager

levels of status. The low to high status levels were developed using the Pineo-Porter-McRoberts Socioeconomic Classification, grouping farm labourers, unskilled and semi-skilled manual and clerical as Low status; farmers, skilled manual and clerical, foremen and supervisors as Medium status; middle management, technicians and semi-professionals as High status. The Professional category included high level management, employed and self-employed professionals. The unemployed category also included those respondents or partners who were keeping house, and did not include those outside the job market, ie., the retired, disabled or in-school. These categorizations most closely resemble those described by Gelles (1972).

Household income was divided into six categories which roughly divided the respondents into sixtiles of income, rather than using the now outdated dollar ranges used by Gelles. Religious preference was divided into three categories: Protestant and other religions, Catholic, and no religious preference. Social isolation was not statistically measured by Gelles, but in this study the respondent's membership in community organizations was used and grouped as none, one, two, or more than three memberships. These were the independent variables used to resemble Gelles's situational and family-social structural factors.

Family structure variables were measured by the differences between the spouses in educational attainment, occupational status and age. The educational attainment and occupational status of husband and wife were compared by categories, rather than exact response. Whereas age was compared by the actual age, as this

appeared to be Gelles's method. Three categories arose for each variable: Husband higher, Wife higher and Same. Gelles's family structure variables indicate an individual's achieved and ascribed status within the family.

The final group of factors, structural stresses within the family, were measured by the number of children in the family and the differences in religious preferences of the partners. Although Gelles had grouped the family size into only three categories, four categories (none, one, two, and three or more children) were used in this study to allow for the trend toward smaller families yet allow identification of larger families. To determine the religious differences between the couple, the religious preferences were compared ungrouped, and categorized as same or different religious preferences.

## E. METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data on the nonmetropolitan couples was undertaken to determine the extent and patterns of marital violence. For a demographic overview of the nonmetropolitan couples, a statistical summary of selected characteristics was developed. The extent of marital violence was calculated as the percent of respondents among the nonmetropolitan couples who reported any, frequent incidents or wife abuse. The patterns of marital violence were identified by examining the statistical relationship between the dependent and independent variables, ie. between the measures of marital violence and the factors of alcohol consumption, group

membership, religious preferences and the other socio-economic characteristics. The crosstabulation analysis tested for a relationship between marital violence and each of the selected characteristics. The significance of the relationship (chi-square value significant at .05 or less) between the dependent and independent variables would indicate whether or not a relationship existed between marital violence and the selected characteristics. These results were then compared to the hypothesized results listed in Table 2 which were derived from Gelles's study. Significant relationships (.05 or less) would support Gelles's proposition. Support for a majority of the hypothesized results would be evidence of support for his first proposition.

The statistical procedure was chosen to resemble Gelles's study and work within the limitations of nonparametric data on a relatively small sample. Crosstabulations of the independent to the dependent variables provided cell percentages for comparison to the hypotheses. Chi-square values and frequencies of row, column and cell counts were calculated using the SPSSx package.

# CHAPTER 4

## FACTORS RELATED TO MARITAL VIOLENCE

Determining the socio-economic characteristics which differentiate violent from non-violent partners will contribute to an understanding of this social problem. Social services and advocacy groups could use this knowledge to identify those couples in need and to substantiate their efforts for public and governmental support. Independent confirmation of the extent of spouse abuse in nonmetropolitan Alberta could help to redirect services. Understanding of the socio-economic factors related to marital violence could contribute to theoretical research and evaluation of intervention techniques.

The extent and patterns of marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta are analysed in this chapter. An overview of the sample population and a comparison to the general Alberta population are presented in a demographic profile. The extent of marital violence, measured as any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse, are summarized. The descriptions of the patterns of marital violence include noteworthy high or low levels of each measure of marital violence, and the interrelationships between these measures. The respondents' reports of knowing an abused woman are also compared to the selected characteristics to determine if there are significant socio-economic patterns to that knowledge. Significant relationships of marital violence across the selected characteristics have been

discussed and twelve hypotheses (see Table 2), derived from Gelles's study, were tested. If significant relationships are found in support of a majority of the hypothesized results, then support for his proposition would be provided through this project. The detailed results of this project and Gelles's study are presented in Appendix C.

## A. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The sample of 255 respondents, drawn from the AAS, were selected on the basis of their nonmetropolitan residence and their married or cohabitation status. The sample represents 0.11% of the 216,625 married couples in nonmetropolitan Alberta (total adult population of 499,080) (Census Canada Profiles, 1986). To give an overview of the respondents, the following descriptions examine various characteristics of the total nonmetropolitan couple sample and their representativeness of nonmetropolitan Albertans. A more detailed analysis of the research variables is contained in the discussion of the extent and patterns of marital violence.

### Community Size

The study sample were residents of medium and small cities, towns and rural areas (Table 4). Urban residents composed 76% of the study couples and 82% of the violent couples. Since rural residents represent 40% of nonmetropolitan Alberta, the rural couples (24%) in the sample are underrepresented in the study (see Table 5). The couples in the study sample are more representative of the urban residents of nonmetropolitan Alberta.

TABLE 4

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

| | NonMetro Couples | Violent Couples |
|---|---|---|
| TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS | 255 | 33 |
| GENDER OF RESPONDENTS | | |
| Males | 122 | 17 |
| Females | 133 | 16 |
| MARITAL STATUS | | |
| Single | 5 | 2 |
| Married | 231 | 25 |
| Common-law | 15 | 4 |
| Divorced | 1 | 0 |
| Separated | 2 | 2 |
| Widowed | 1 | 0 |
| HOUSEHOLD INCOME | | |
| $ 0-15,999 | 26 | 2 |
| $16,000-25,999 | 34 | 7 |
| $26,000-35,999 | 34 | 9 |
| $36,000-49,999 | 31 | 3 |
| $50,000-64,999 | 40 | 4 |
| $65,000 and over | 32 | 2 |
| COMMUNITY SIZE | | |
| Under 1000 | 60 | 6 |
| 1000 - 9999 | 105 | 12 |
| 10,000 - 99,999 | 90 | 15 |
| NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY | | |
| None | 116 | 13 |
| One | 53 | 14 |
| Two | 57 | 4 |
| Three or more | 29 | 2 |

TABLE 4 (continued)

| | NONMETRO COUPLES | | VIOLENT COUPLES | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGE (Age Group) | Husband | Wife | Husband | Wife |
| 18 - 30 years | 50 | 74 | 15 | 21 |
| 31 - 40 " | 70 | 69 | 10 | 6 |
| 41 - 50 " | 49 | 40 | 4 | 3 |
| 51 and older | 80 | 70 | 2 | 3 |
| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL | | | | |
| None - Elementary | 12 | 10 | 0 | 1 |
| Jr. High - some High School | 86 | 82 | 8 | 9 |
| High School completed | 57 | 68 | 11 | 8 |
| NonUniv, Incomp University | 59 | 70 | 6 | 10 |
| Univ degree or more | 30 | 19 | 4 | 3 |
| EMPLOYMENT STATUS | | | | |
| Employed full-time | 174 | 74 | 25 | 13 |
| Employed part-time | 14 | 49 | 1 | 7 |
| Unemployed | 12 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Retired | 43 | 25 | 2 | 1 |
| In-school | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Keeping House | 0 | 91 | 0 | 9 |
| Unable to Work | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| OCCUPATIONAL STATUS | | | | |
| Professional, Managerial | 25 | 25 | 1 | 1 |
| High - Tech., Semi-profl | 26 | 28 | 2 | 5 |
| Medium - Farmers,Skilled | 94 | 49 | 14 | 2 |
| Low - Labourer, clerical | 53 | 104 | 9 | 20 |
| Unemployed (inc. keep house) | 12 | 97 | 1 | 6 |

Age and Gender

Of the 255 respondents in the nonmetropolitan couples, females (52.2%) were a slightly higher proportion than males (see Table 4). In the violent couple group, the ratio of male to female respondents was 17 to 16. Both samples contained a relatively equal ratio of male to female respondents.

The nonmetropolitan couples closely resembled the proportions of age groups of nonmetropolitan Alberta (see Table 5), although there were slightly less in the 18-30 year category and slightly more in the 51 and older category. In the study sample, the modal age for husbands was 51 years and older, and for the wives, 18 - 30 years old. For the violent couples, the modal age was 18 - 30 years old for both husbands and wives. The nonmetropolitan couples represented their general population by age.

Marital Status

Most of the couples (231/255) in the nonmetropolitan sample were legally married. The rest were single, living commonlaw, divorced, separated or widowed as shown in Table 4. In the violent group, the married were a smaller portion (75.8%) of couples. Both of the separated respondents in the nonmetropolitan group appeared in the violent couple group. Of the twenty commonlaw and single nonmetropolitan couples, 30% were violent couples. Although the marital status of the violent group were skewed toward nonmarried couples, the total nonmetropolitan couple sample was proportionally equivalent to the general population by marital status (see Table 5).

TABLE 5

COMPARISONS AMONG ALL ALBERTANS, ALL NONMETROPOLITAN AND VIOLENT COUPLES ON VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS

| | ALL ALBERTA[1] | NONMETRO | VIOLENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| AGE (% of those 18+) | | | |
| 18 - 30 years | 28% | 25% | 56% |
| 31 - 40 " | 26% | 28% | 25% |
| 41 - 50 " | 17% | 18% | 11% |
| 51 and over | 24% | 30% | 8% |

| | NONMETRO ALTA[2] | NONMETRO | VIOLENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| MARITAL STATUS | | | |
| Married, common-law | 86% | 98% | 93% |
| Divorced | 4 | 0.4 | 0 |
| Separated | 3 | 0.8 | 7 |
| Widowed | 7 | 0.4 | 0 |
| CHILDREN IN FAMILY | | | |
| None | 36% | 46% | 39% |
| One | 20 | 21 | 42 |
| Two | 26 | 22 | 12 |
| Three or more | 18 | 11 | 6 |
| COMMUNITY SIZE | | | |
| Under 1000 | 40% | 24% | 18% |
| 1000 - 9,999 | 30 | 41 | 36 |
| 10,000 - 99,999 | 30 | 35 | 45 |

1. Age group proportions derived from Alberta Statistical Review, Fourth Quarter, 1989, Alberta Treasury Bureau of Statistics, page 5.

2. Derived from Census Canada Profiles, Urban and Rural Areas, Canada, Provinces and Territories Part 1, Canada 1986, pages 91 -97.

Number of Children

Most nonmetropolitan families (64%) have children although only 54% of the study sample did. Family size in the nonmetropolitan couple sample ranged from none to five children. In the violent families, most (71%) had one or no children. The study sample slightly overrepresents those families with no children (see Table 5).

Household Income

The annual household income of the nonmetropolitan couples ranged from four couples reporting 'Under $6,000' to thirty-two respondents who reported 'Over $75,000'. The median household income was $30,000 - 31,999 (Kinzel, 1987) which is lower than the average of $42,428 for Albertan households in 1986 (Canada Yearbook, 1990). Most of the violent couples reported household incomes of less than $36,000 (see Table 4). The study sample appears to be more representative of the lower income Albertans.

Employment Status

Most nonmetropolitan couples (62%) in the study sample were employed full or part-time (see Table 4). Most wives were working part-time. The unemployment rate among the nonmetropolitan sample couples and the violent couples were 3.6% and 1.7%, respectively, which are lower than the Alberta rate of 9.6% for that year (Alberta Statistical Review, 1989). Those out of the labour market such as retired, in school, keeping house and unable to work, formed 34% of the sample and 22% of the violent spouses. The study sample represented more of the employed nonmetropolitan Albertans.

## Occupational Status

As shown in Table 4, all levels of occupational status were represented in the study sample. Men in the study sample and in violent couple group were more commonly found in the medium level occupations (farmers, skilled clerical and trades, foremen and supervisors). Most women were in low status jobs (farm labour, unskilled and semi-skilled manual, clerical and service jobs).

## Educational Level

The study sample contained husbands and wives who ranged in level of educational attainment from none to university doctorates. Most of the study sample and the violent couples (62% and 70%, respectively) had completed high school or more. The modal category for the study sample was 'Junior High - some High School', whereas for the violent couples, more husbands had completed high school and wives had 'Non University' education. In the study sample and the violent couple group, all levels of education were represented although more women from both groups had post-secondary education than the men did.

## Summary of Sample Representativeness

The sample of nonmetropolitan couples generally resembles the nonmetropolitan population of Alberta with the following exceptions. The study sample represents the urban more than the rural residents. By age categories, the study sample represents slightly less of the young adults (18 - 30 years) and slightly more of the older adults (51 and older). The marital status of the sample couples compares to those of Albertans. The sample couples are slightly more

representative of those with one or no children. All income levels are represented, although the median household income of the sample in lower than the Alberta average. More of Alberta's employed are represented in the nonmetropolitan sample. All levels of occupational status and educational attainment are represented by the sample couples. The study sample of couples may be generally compared to the total population of nonmetropolitan Alberta.

## B. THE EXTENT OF MARITAL VIOLENCE

Marital violence was reported by 13% of the nonmetropolitan couples. Two thirds of those who reported physical violence, reported it to be wife abuse and 42% of those reporting violence, reported frequent incidents (more than six times in the past year).

Some socio-economic characteristics showed higher levels of marital violence, in comparison to the nonviolent couples of those categories. Age categories revealed the highest levels, for example, in the '18 - 30' year category, 30% of the husbands and 28.4% of the wives reported marital violence. The frequency of drinking and amount drank indicated that 29.4% of 'Very Frequent' drinkers and 24.1% of 'Moderate' consuming drinkers reported violence in their marriage. Another high level of marital violence was found in one child families (26.4%). High levels of marital violence were reported in two household income categories, that is, 26% of couples earning $26,000 - 35,999, and 21% of those earning $16,000 - 25,999. Marital status was another indicator of marital violence. Both of the separated couples and 27% of the commonlaw couples reported physical violence. More

moderate levels of marital violence were identified through occupational status, educational level, religion, and group membership. The extent of marital violence has been identified in this brief summary of the selected characteristics. Characteristics of alcohol consumption, age, family size, household income and marital status were strong indicators of the extent of marital violence.

The following sections discuss the relationships between the selected characteristics and the three measures of marital violence, any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse.

## C. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PATTERNS OF MARITAL VIOLENCE

### Alcohol Consumption and Marital Violence

The relationship between alcohol consumption by the respondent and marital violence are summarized in Figures 1 - 2. The highest rates of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse were among the 'Very Frequent' drinkers (3-4 days/week or more) and among 'Moderate' consuming drinkers (3 drinks/session). Generally all three measures of marital violence increased with the frequency of drinking and by the amount drank per session, except for 'Very Heavy' drinkers (4 or more per session), the largest group of drinkers, among whom the level of marital violence declined. Those who reported never drinking had the lowest levels of any violence but those four couples who did report violence were involved in wife abuse. Wife abuse accounted for most of the marital violence across all levels of frequency and amount of alcohol consumed by respondents.

**FIGURE 1**
**MARITAL VIOLENCE AND FREQUENCY OF DRINKING**

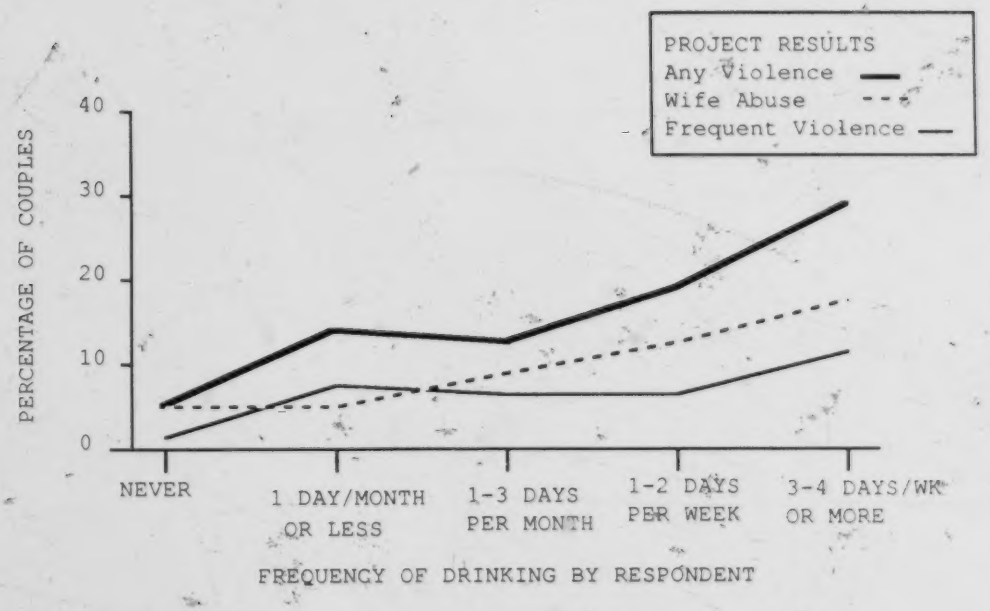
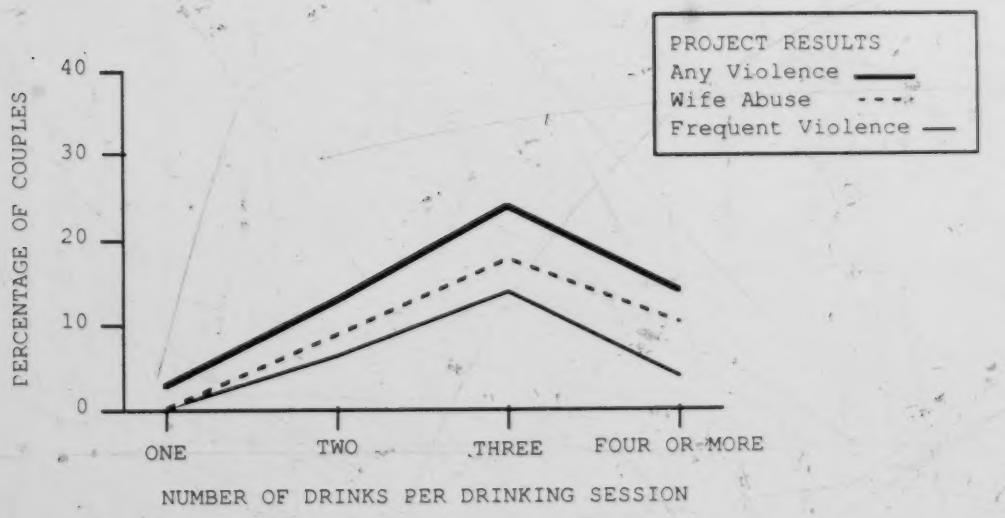



**FIGURE 2**
**MARITAL VIOLENCE AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION**



The relationship between marital violence and frequency of drinking was directly related. The amount of consumption was also directly related for all measures of marital violence except for the 'Very Heavy' drinkers. Small cell counts necessitated collapsing the categories, that is, the categories were regrouped as three days or less per month and more than that, for frequency of consumption and into two drinks or less per session and more per session, for amount of consumption. Despite the small sample size, a significant relationship (probability = .0347) was found between alcohol consumption and all three measures of marital violence, thereby supporting the hypothesized result predicted.

Age and Marital Violence

Marital violence was found to be related to the age of the couples (see Appendix Table C for full results). As indicated in Figures 3 to 5, the highest levels of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse were reported by the youngest spouses (18 - 30 years). Reports of physical violence declined to the lowest levels among the '51 and older' spouses. All three measures of marital violence indicated a significant inverse relationship to the age of husband and wife (probability ranged from .0001 to .0094).

Young couples experienced the most physical violence. Thirty percent of the husbands and 28.4% of the wives aged 18 - 30 years, reported violence. Of those, half reported that it was wife abuse (Figure 5) and that the violence was frequent (Figure 4). In the next age group (31 - 40 years), fewer reported violence but most of the marital violence was directed at the wife. The proposition of marital

**FIGURE 3 ANY MARITAL VIOLENCE BY AGE**

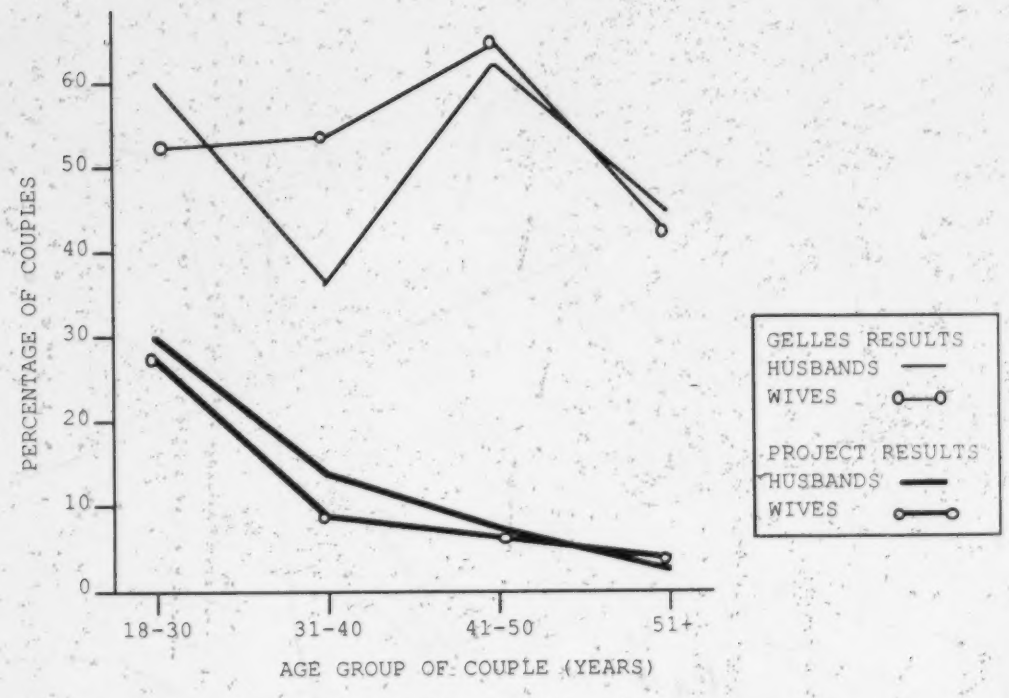
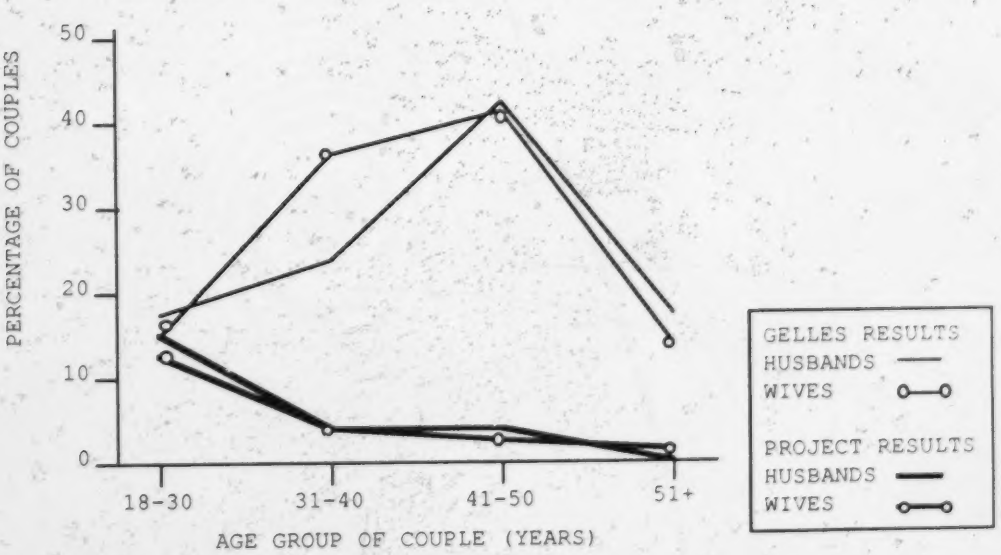


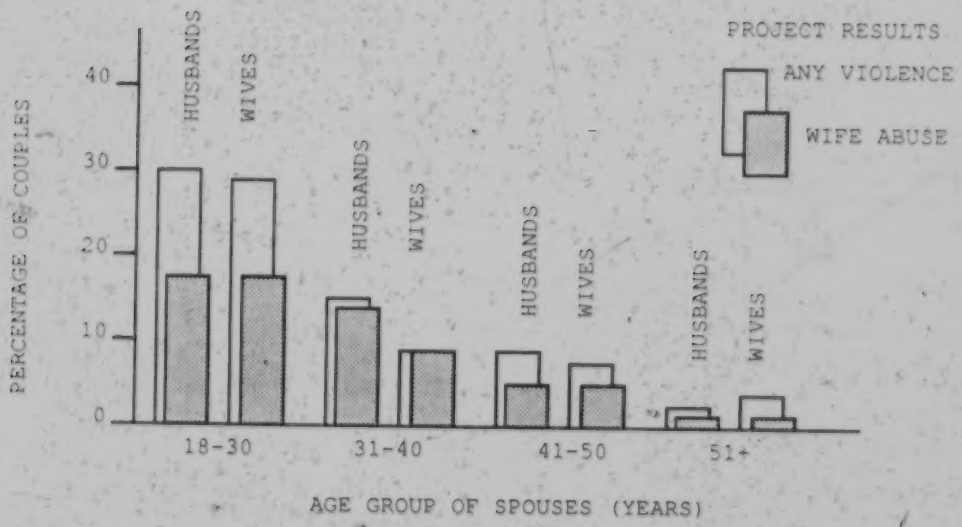

**FIGURE 4 FREQUENT MARITAL VIOLENCE BY AGE**



violence which was directed only at the wife remained high through the other age categories.

This inverse relationship between marital violence and age bears little resemblance to Gelles's results. His findings that marital violence was most common in middle age and that frequent violence increased to age 41 - 50 years were not supported by the study. For the couples aged 51 and older, the decline in any violence and frequent violence was generally supported by this study. Any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse were inversely related to the age of the spouses, not directly related as Gelles suggested.

**FIGURE 5**
**WIFE ABUSE AND ANY VIOLENCE BY AGE**



Educational Attainment and Marital Violence

The partners' level of education had no relationship to their reports of marital violence (Figure 6 and 7), although any violence was reported highest among husbands who had completed high school (19.3%) and among wives with University degrees or higher education (15.8%). The highest percentage of frequently violent couples were among those with a husband who similarily had completed high school or among wives with elementary education or less. Wife abuse (Figure 8) was highest among university graduated husbands and wives. In fact,

FIGURE 6
MARTIAL VIOLENCE BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

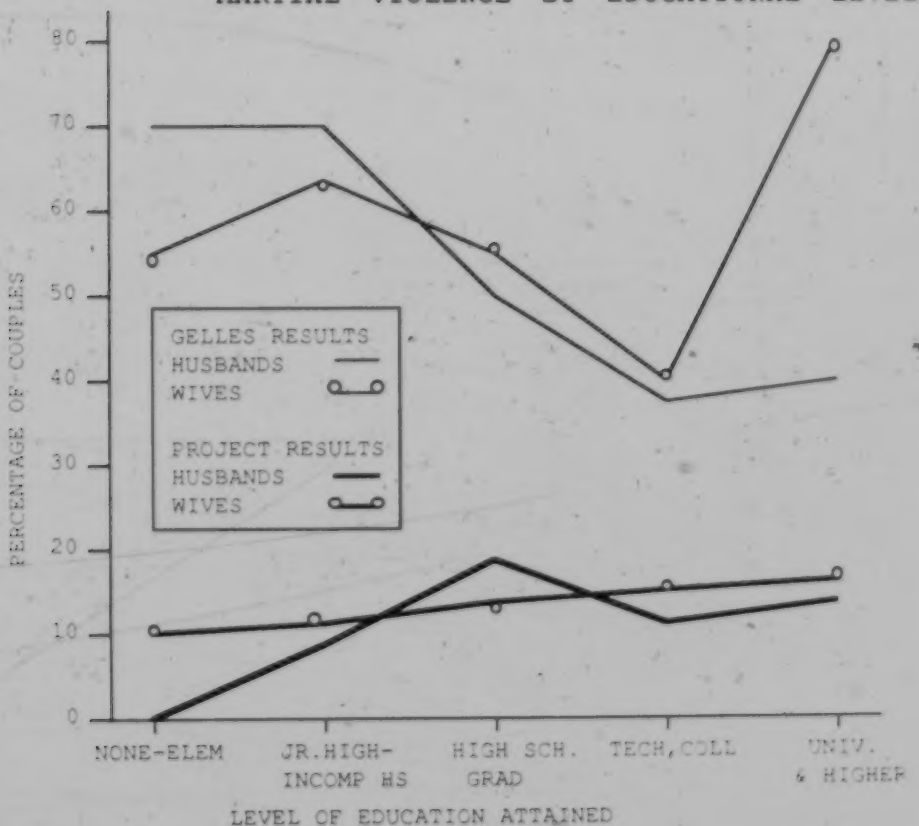


FIGURE 7
FREQUENT VIOLENCE BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

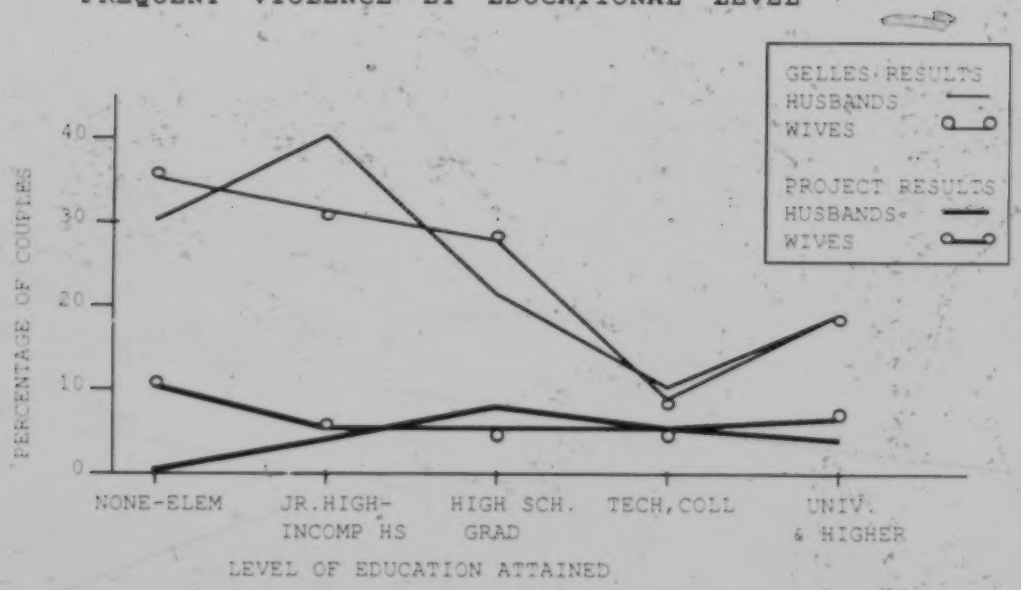
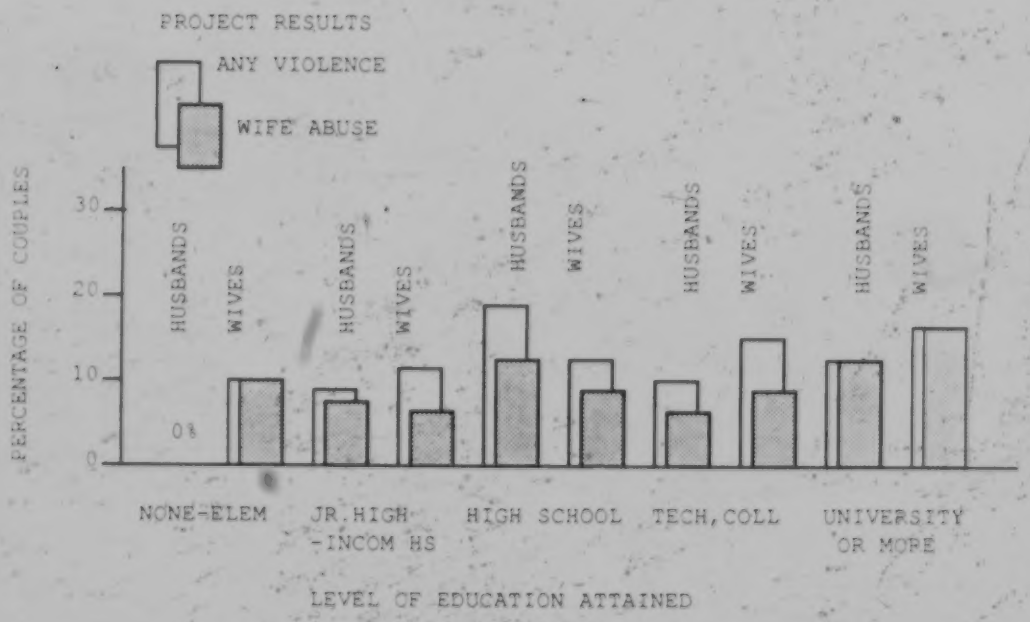



FIGURE 8
WIFE ABUSE AND ANY VIOLENCE BY EDUCATION



all of the violence reported for the women with University degrees was wife abuse. No men with elementary or less reported being in violent relationships. Of the ten lowest educated women (elementary or less), the wife in the violent couple was the one inflicting the physical violence. Although certain high and low points were discovered across various levels of education, no significant relationships were found.

There appeared to be a general trend between any violence, wife abuse and educational attainment, particularly for wives' educational level, but this was not found to be statistically significant. The percent of frequent marital violence was relatively constant across all levels of education.

Gelles' results predicted an inverse relationship between any violence, frequent violence and educational level, with the exception of wives with University degrees. This result was not supported but instead found that there is no linear relationship between marital violence and educational attainment.

## Occupational Status and Marital Violence

The occupational status of the violent couples was compared to that of nonviolent couples. Spouses with low occupational status (unskilled and semi-skilled jobs) had the highest levels of any violence (Figure 9). Frequent violence was highest among men and women of high occupational status (Figure 10). Wife abuse was highest among husbands with low occupational status and among wives with high occupational status (middle management, technicians, semi-professionals) (Figure 11). At the extreme ends of occupational status were

the lowest levels of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse. The lowest rates of physical violence were reported among unemployed wives and those keeping house. The one unemployed husband abused his wife infrequently. Of those in the 'Professional/Managerial occupations, in both cases, the victim was the wife. Marital violence occurred across all levels of occupational status.

FIGURE 9 MARITAL VIOLENCE BY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

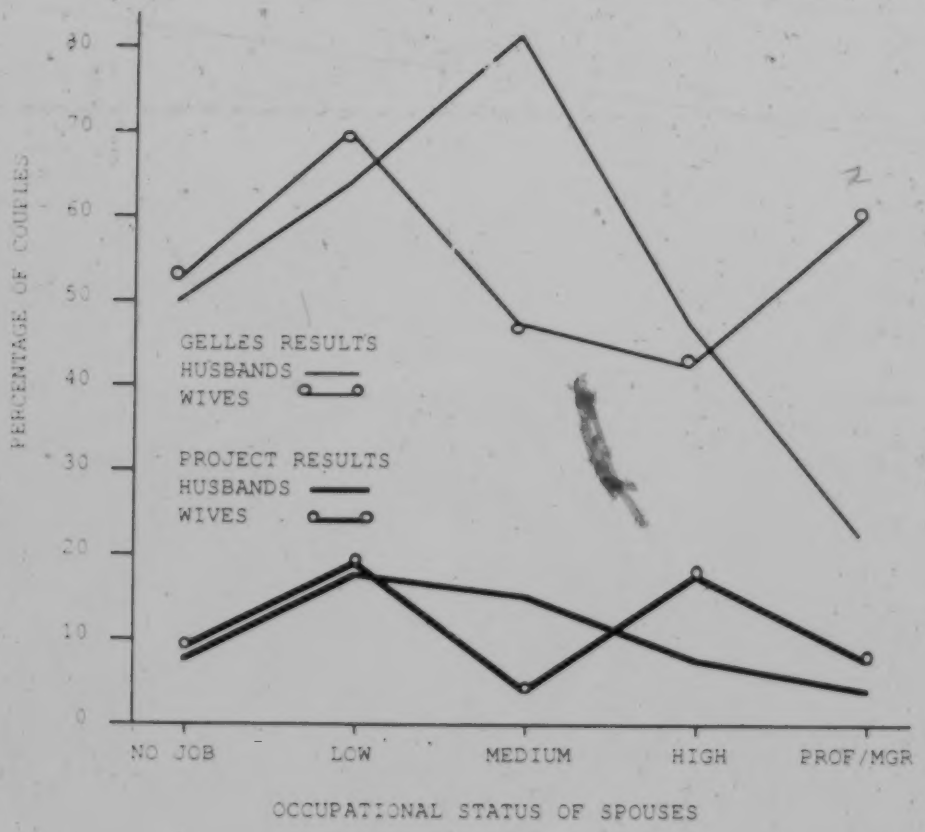


**FIGURE 10**
**FREQUENT VIOLENCE BY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS**

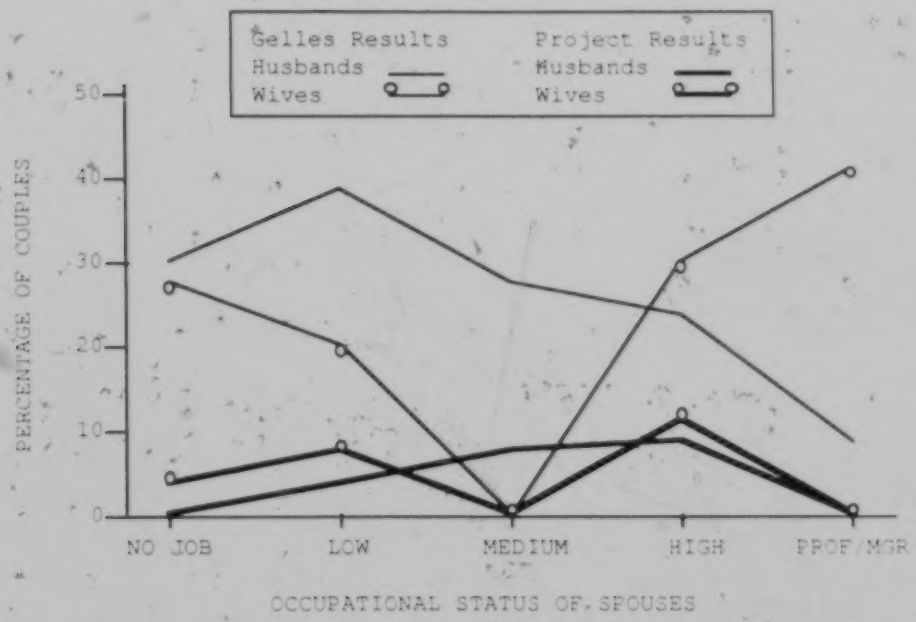
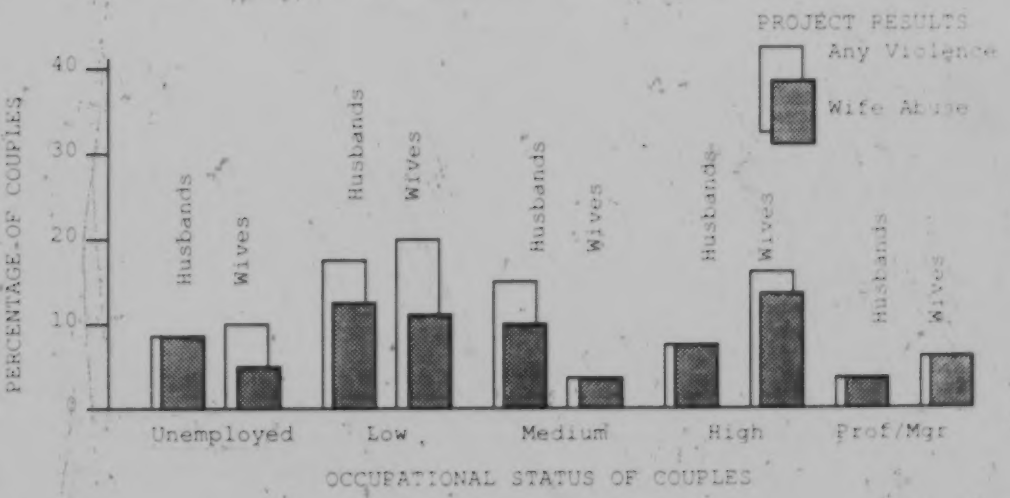



**FIGURE 11**
**WIFE ABUSE & ANY VIOLENCE BY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS**



For this variable, only one significant relationship could be found. Any violence was reported as highest among women of low occupational status, lower among those of medium status and high again among high status wives (probability = .0440). The other measures, frequent violence and wife abuse generally followed the same pattern for female occupational status, but this was not found statistically significant. With male occupational status, all measures of marital violence generally declined with rise in status.

Marital violence varied across occupational status levels for wives and declined slightly for husbands' occupational status. This result gives little support for Gelles's conclusion that marital violence declines with occupational status, except for Professional/Managerial wives.

Household Income and Marital Violence

Marital violence varied across all levels of household income. All three measures of marital violence rose from the lowest income sextile to the $26,000 - 35,999 category, but declined in the higher income categories (refer to Figure 12 and 13). The highest levels of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse were found in the $26,000 - 35,999 income level. The households in the lowest three income groups reported more than twice the amount of marital violence. As with the other selected characteristics, wife abuse was the major portion of marital violence across all income categories, with two interesting exceptions. In the violent households of the lowest income group (0 - $15,999), the husbands were the ones receiving the physical violence at rates of 15 and 33 times in that

FIGURE 12 GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

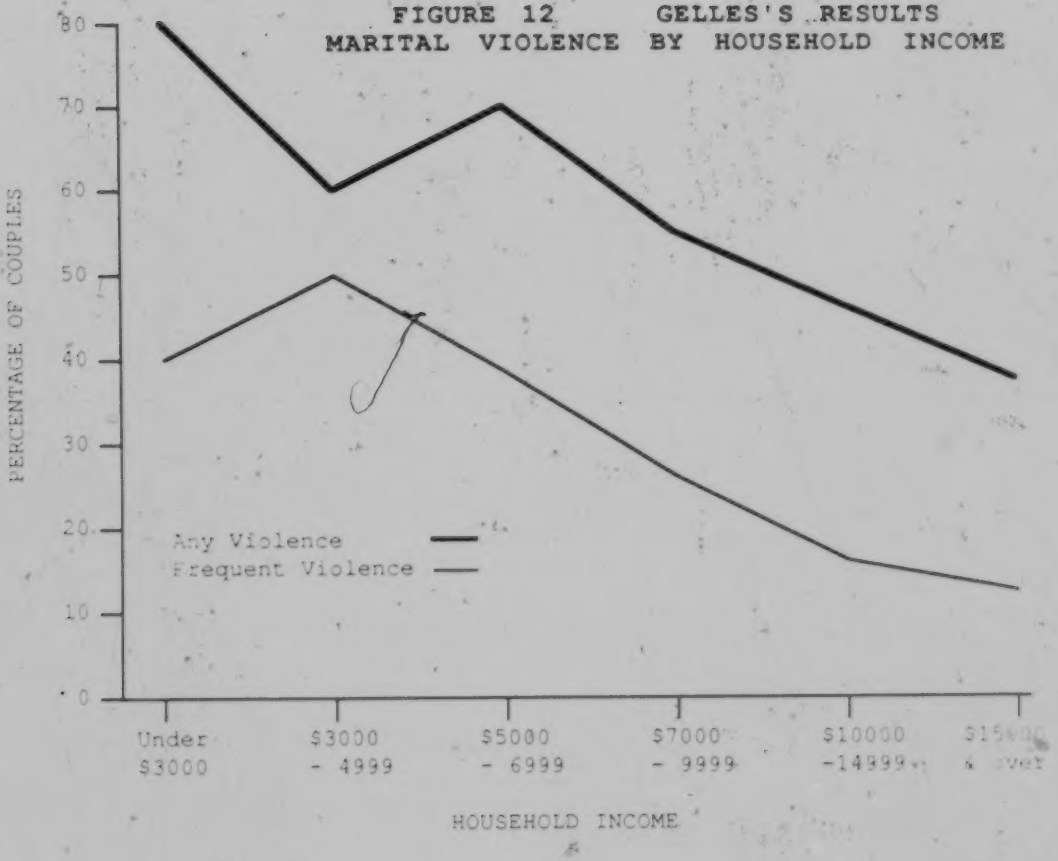
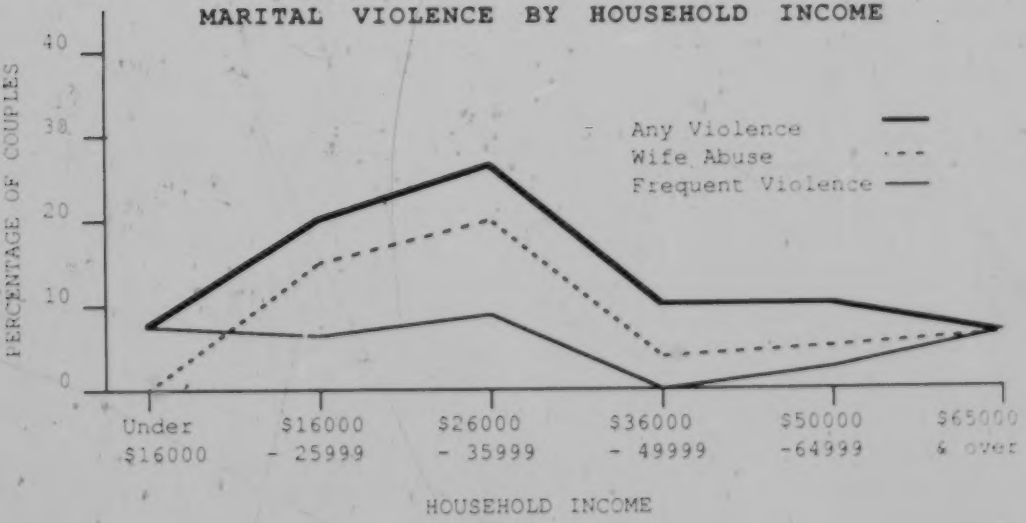



FIGURE 13 PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



past year. In contrast, the wives were the frequently abused victims in the two violent households in the highest household income group ($65,000 and more).

The predicted result was that marital violence would decline with the rise in household income. This was supported by the results of this analysis, two statisically significant relationships were found. Any violence and wife abuse (probability = .0338 and .0354, respectively) declined significantly with rise in household income.

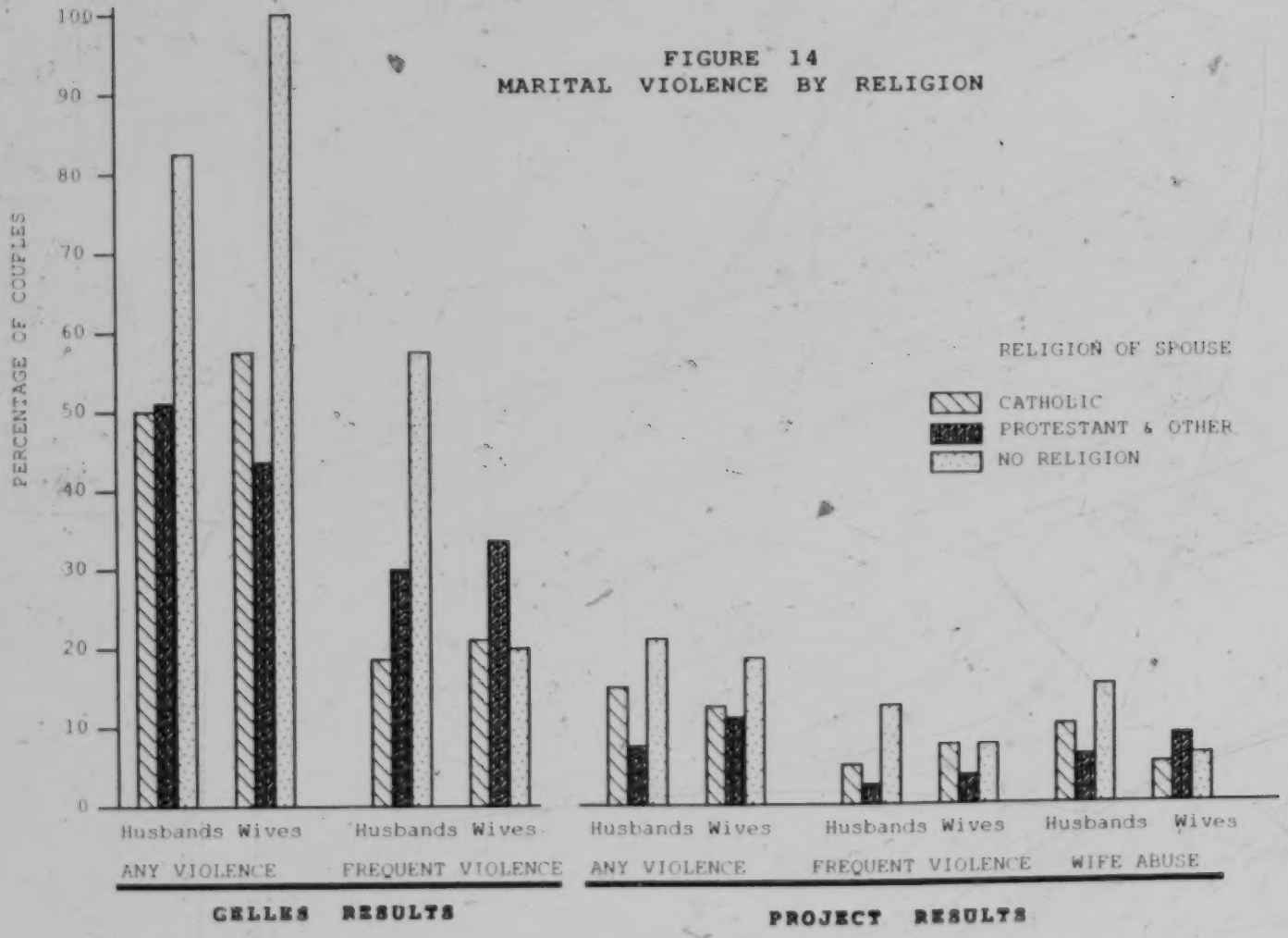
Religious Preference and Marital Violence

Religious preference was related to marital violence in the study couples. Examination of the religious preference summarized in Figure 14, show that the highest levels of all measures of violence were found among husbands with 'No Religion'. Of those with a religious preference, Catholic men were twice as likely to be in violent marriages that the 'Protestant & Other' category. Any and frequent violence was significantly related to the husbands' religious preference (probability = .0499 and .0177, respectively).

The religious preference of wives did not show as clear a pattern. Any violence was highest among women with 'No Religion'. Equally high rates of frequent violence were found among Catholic women and those with 'No religion'. 'Protestant & Other' wives experienced the highest rates of abuse.

The expected result was that marital violence would be highest among those with no religious preference, and that Catholics and Protestants would have similar levels of violence. This expectation was met among those couples with 'No Religion'. Between the Catholics

FIGURE 14
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY RELIGION



and Protestants, wives in violent couples were similar but husbands were significantly different. Gelles's predicted result was supported for those of no religious preference, but contradicted by the finding that the husband's religion was an indicator of marital violence.

Group Membership and Marital Violence

The social isolation, as measured by the respondent's membership in community groups, was compared to marital violence (Figure 15). Any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse varied across the levels of group membership from none, one, two, or three and more community groups.

**FIGURE 15**
**MARITAL VIOLENCE BY GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

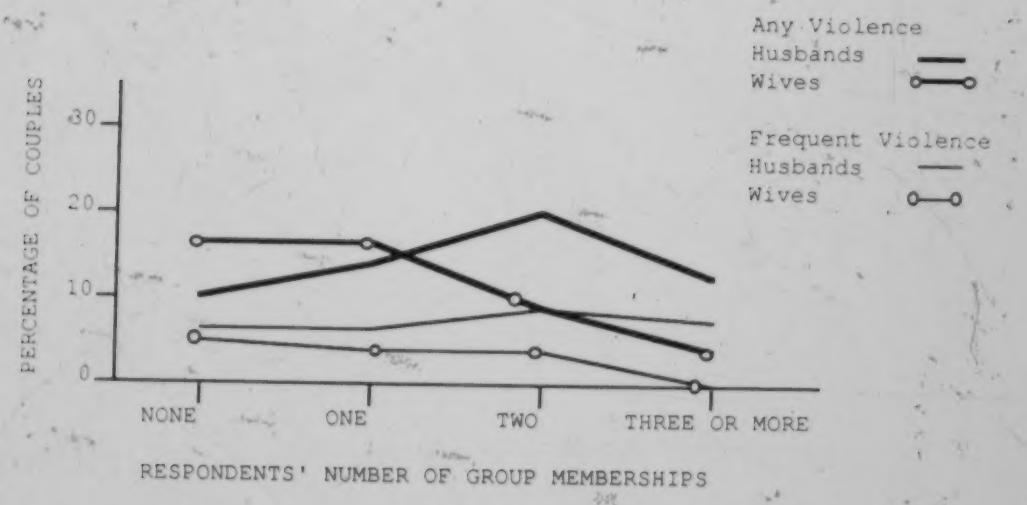
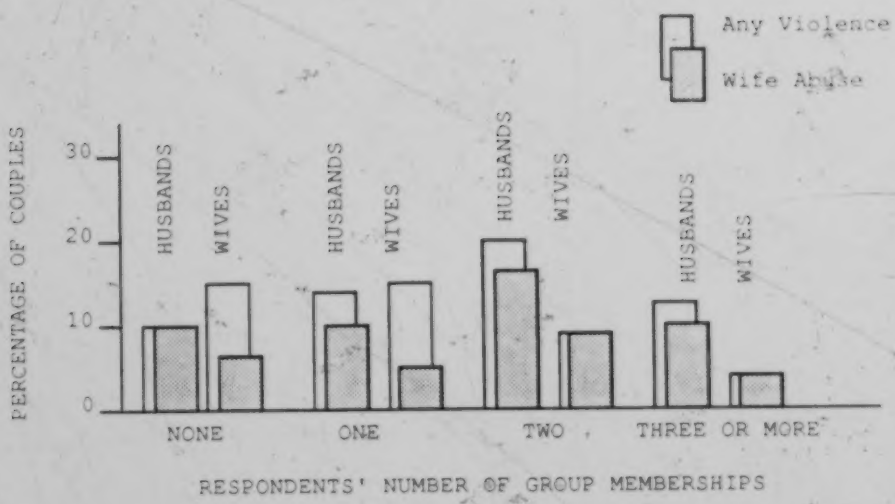


FIGURE 16
WIFE ABUSE & ANY VIOLENCE BY GROUP MEMBERSHIP




The patterns of marital violence across group membership differed by the gender of the respondent. Male respondents who belonged to two community groups reported the highest level of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse. Any violence was highest in the group of women who belonged to one or no groups. Wife abuse (Figure 16) was highest among women who belonged to two groups. Wife abuse constituted all of the physical violence in two categories: men who belonged to no groups and women who belonged to three or more groups.

Overall no significant relationships were discovered but some general trends emerged. For male respondents, the levels of any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse were evenly distributed across all categories of group membership. For female respondents, the rise in group membership corresponded with a slight decline in any and frequent violence, especially for those with three or more

memberships and wife abuse remained evenly distributed. No significant relationships were found between group membership and marital violence.

The hypothesized relationship was that marital violence declined with increased group membership, the measure of social isolation. This project found that marital violence was not significantly related to group membership. Decreased social isolation (more group memberships) by the respondents did not significantly relate to decreased levels of marital violence.

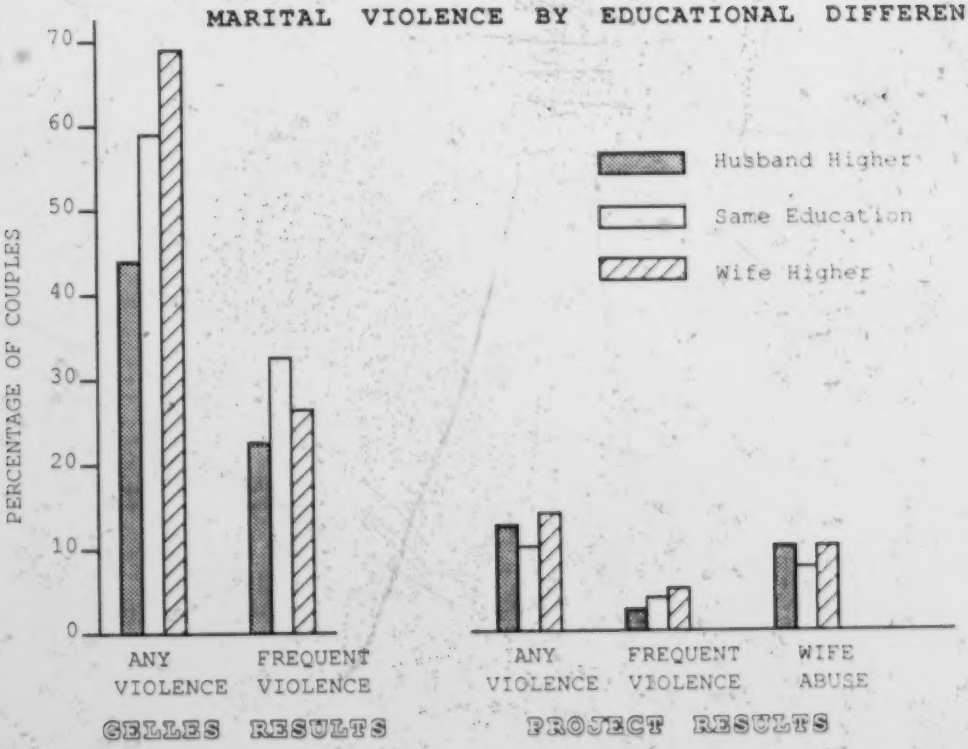
Differences in Educational Attainment and Marital Violence

The difference in husband's and wife's level of education was compared to measures of marital violence. Almost half of the couples (48.8%) had equal levels of education (see Figure 17). Equal proportions of couples had 'Husband Higher' and 'Wife Higher' levels of education.

All measures of marital violence were slightly higher among couples where wife had more education but no significant relationships were found. Frequent violence was slightly less common if husband had more education but wife abuse was the same for these couples and those with 'Wife Higher'. Wife abuse was slightly lower among couples of equal educational level.

The results did not significantly resemble those predicted from Gelles. 'Wife Higher' couples reported only slightly more marital violence than other couples but not significantly more. Educational differences were not significantly related to marital violence.

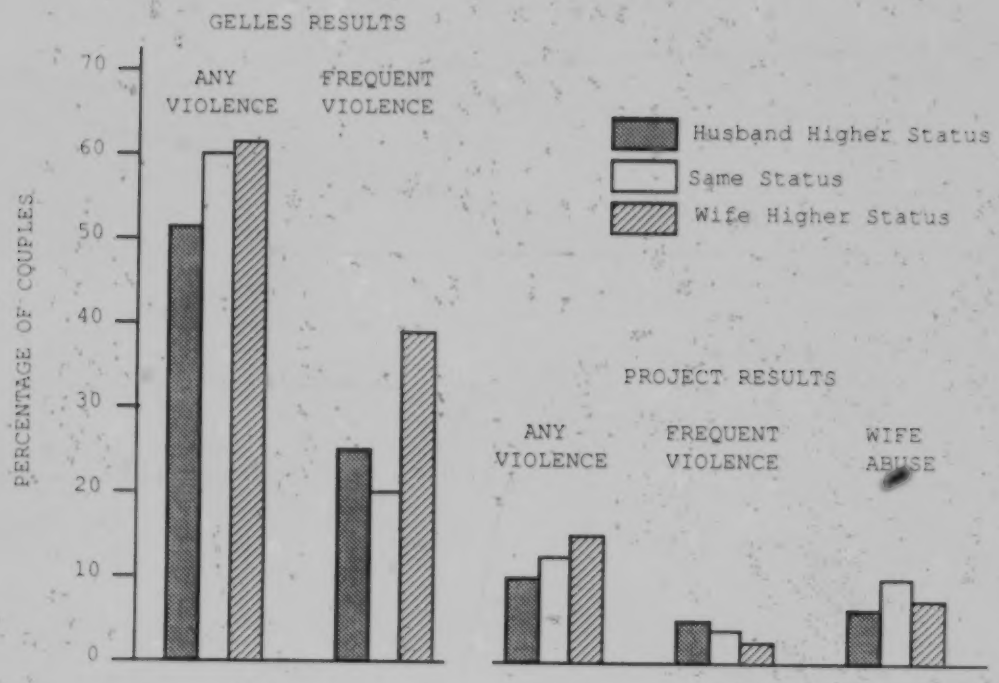
FIGURE 17
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCE




Differences in Occupational Status and Marital Violence

Three measures of marital violence were compared to the differences in husband-wife level of occupational status, as presented in Figure 18. The smallest category contained those couples in which the wife had a higher occupational level.

FIGURE 18
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY OCCUPATIONAL DIFFERENCES




The measures of marital violence gave varied trends across the difference categories. Any violence increased from 'Husbands Higher', to 'Equal Status' couples and highest for 'Wife Higher' couples. In contrast, frequent violence decreased across these categories. Wife abuse was highest for 'Equal Status' couples and lower for both of the different occupational status groups.

No significant relationships were found to support Gelles's proposition that marital violence increased among couples if wife had a higher occupational status. Differences in occupational status did not relate to reported physical violence.

FIGURE 19
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY DIFFERENCE IN AGE

Age Differential and Marital Violence

By comparing the ages of the sample spouses, the relationship of age differential to marital violence was evaluated. Approximately three quarters of the couples reported that the husband was older.

As indicated in Figure 19, the 'Male Older' couples reported the highest levels of any violence and wife abuse. Frequent violence was similar for 'Male Older' and 'Wife Older' couples, and declined for equal age partners. The 'any violence' and wife abuse declined as wife's age equalled or surpassed the husband's. A woman in a violent 'Male Older' couple was three times as likely to be abused than were women in a 'Wife Older' couple. These trends were not significant. No relationships were found for age differences and marital violence.

The expected result of marital violence decreasing if the husband is older, was not strongly evident in the study sample. Any violence and wife abuse did tend to decline in 'Wife Older' couples but not significantly.

Number of Children and Marital Violence

Family size was measured by the number of children. Four categories (no children, one child, two chidren, and three or more children) were compared to the three levels of measurement of marital violence. Most of the study couples (66.3%) had one or no children.

Similar to the other selected characteristics, the levels of frequent violence or wife abuse followed the pattern of any violence (Figure 20 and 21). All measures of marital violence were high among childless couples, peaked in one-child families and declined for those with more children.

Gelles had reported that there was no relationship between family size and marital violence. This analysis shows that the number of children was significantly related to the percent of couples reporting any violence (probability = .0090), and generally related to levels of frequent violence and wife abuse.

FIGURE 20 GELLES RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN

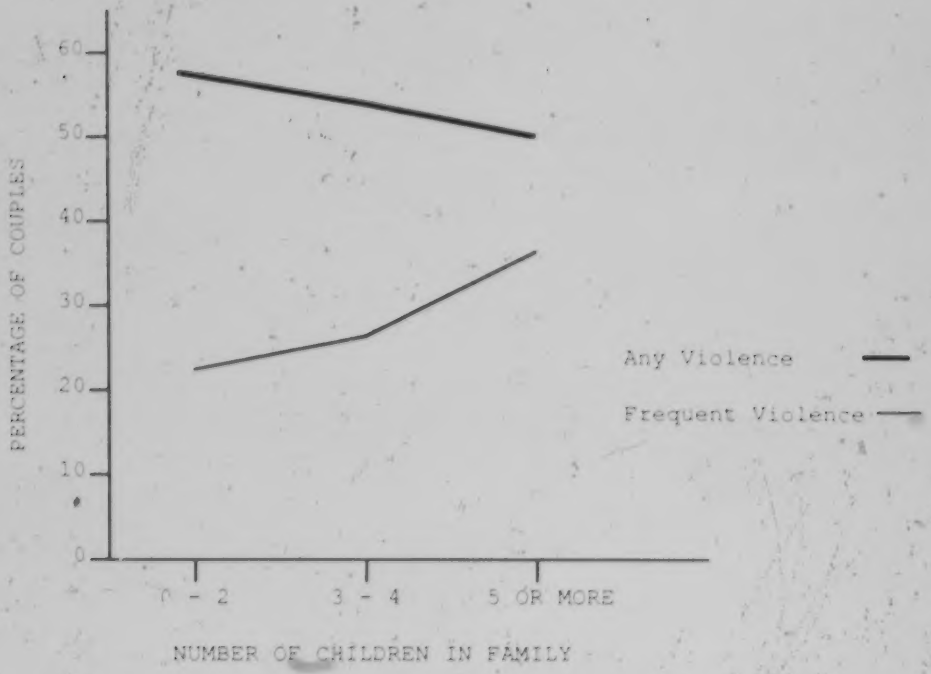
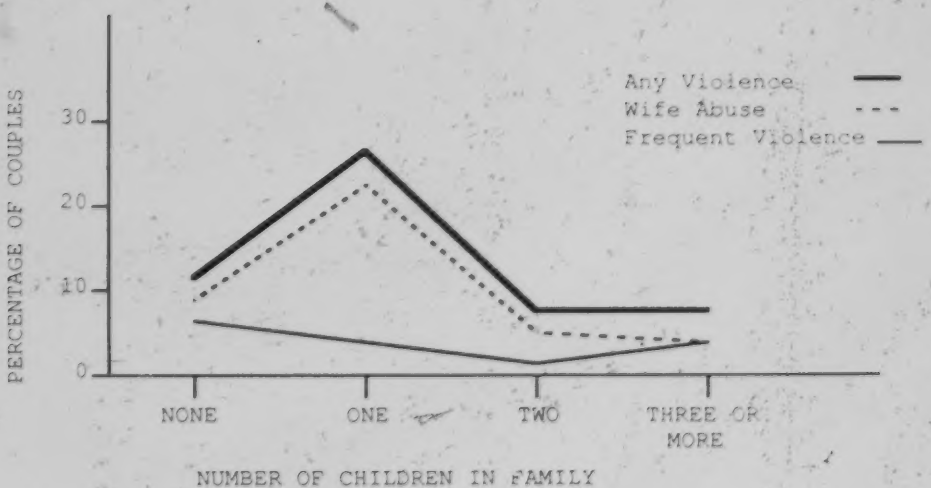



FIGURE 21
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN

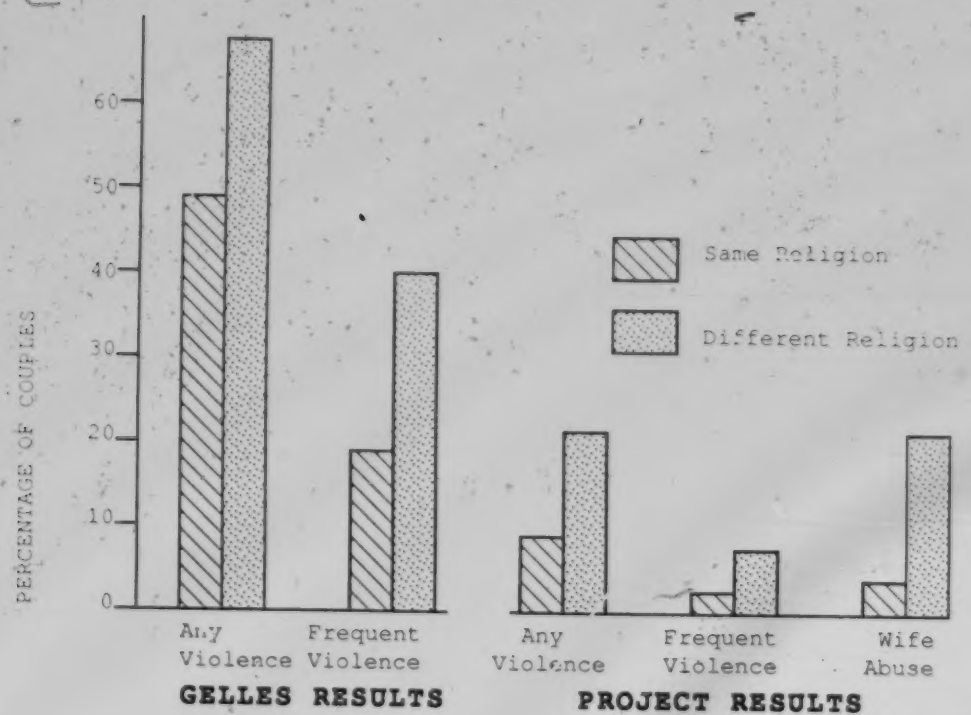


Difference in Religious Preference and Marital Violence

The differences in religious preference of husband and wife was compared to their reports of physical violence. Over 80% of the couples had the same religious preference.

Among couples with religious differences, marital violence was significantly higher for any violence and wife abuse (probability = .0131 and .0001, respectively) (Figure 22). Wife abuse accounted for all of the violence among the 'Different' religion couples. An abused woman was five times more likely to have a husband with a different religious preference. As Gelles's results predicted, religious difference were related to increased marital violence.

FIGURE 22
MARITAL VIOLENCE BY RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCE



Knowing An Abused Woman

This study examined the AAS responses to the question "do you know an abused woman?" to determine if this knowledge was related to the selected socio-economic characteristics.

Knowledge of an abused woman was found to be high across most sectors of nonmetropolitan Alberta as detailed in Appendix C. Gender of the respondent was highly related to this knowledge, as greater proportion of females reported knowing an abused woman. By age group, 75.7% of young (18 - 30 years) females and 22.2% of young males reported this knowledge. A similar gender differential was found in another category with high levels of marital violence. For respondents with low occupational status, 61.6% of females and only 28.6% of males reported knowing an abused woman. Overall, 60.9% of female and 38.3% of male respondents reported knowing an abused woman.

Significant relationships were found for only a few of the selected characteristics. The age of respondents of both genders revealed that knowledge of an abused woman was highest in middle age then declined. This knowledge rose generally with educational level, with high level of group membership (three or more memberships), and with the number of children in the family. Across the other selected characteristics, this knowledge was relatively evenly distributed. Knowledge of an abused woman was significantly related to gender, age, educational level, group membership and family size.

D. Summary of Findings

Analysis of the data on marital violence and the selected characteristics of the nonmetropolitan couples indicates the extent and patterns of marital violence. The representativeness of the study sample suggests that the study's findings are indicative of the behaviour of the general population of nonmetropolitan couples in Alberta.

Thirteen percent of the sample couples experienced one or more acts of physical violence in that year. Most of that violence (22 of the 33 violent couples) reported that it was wife abuse, and almost half of the violent couples (14 of 33) were experiencing frequent violence. The extent of violence was even higher in some categories: young couples (30% of husbands and 28.4% of wives aged 18-30 years), very frequent and moderately heavy drinkers (29.4% and 24.1%, respectively), one-child families (26.4%), low-middle income households (26% of those with annual household income of $26,000 - 35,999), and commonlaw couples (27%). Among nonmetropolitan couples, there is a high rate of marital violence among nonmetropolitan couples, especially those in particular age, alcohol consumption, family size, household income and marital status categories.

Analysis of the relationships between the selected characteristics and the measures of marital violence indicates seven statistically significant relationships, that is, marital violence is related to seven of the selected socio-economic characteristics.

1. Marital violence is directly related to the frequency and amount of alcohol consumption.
2. Marital violence is inversely related to the age.
3. Marital violence is related to the occupational status of wives, that is, it is highest at each end of status level and lowest among the medium status wives.
4. Marital violence is inversely related to household income.
5. Marital violence is related to religious preference, that is, it is highest among spouses with no religious preference and higher among Catholic than Protestant husbands.
6. Marital violence is inversely related to number of children in the family.
7. Marital violence is related to spousal differences in religious preference, that is, it is higher among those couples whose religious preferences differed than among those with same preference.

The data analysis revealed seven significant relationships which were then used to test the twelve hypotheses derived from Gelles's study. Four of the resultant relationships supported the hypotheses that marital violence is related to alcohol consumption, declines with household income, higher among those with no religious preference (although difference was found for Catholic and Protestant husbands) and related to differences in religious preference. These results supported the test hypotheses.

The other three significant relationships that were found in this study did not support the test hypotheses. Testing of these

three hypotheses revealed that three characteristics had different relationships to marital violence than were predicted. Age was inversely related to marital violence rather than increasing to middle age as Gelles reported. Marital violence was related to the occupational status of wives, ie. it increased at each end of the status level, but in a nonlinear relationship. The number of children was found to be inversely related to marital violence, rather than the predicted nonrelationship. Alternative relationships were found for the characteristics of age, occupational status differences and number of children.

From Gelles's results, twelve relationships were predicted. Only four of these found statistically significant support. Three characteristics revealed different relationships to marital violence than predicted. Gelles's proposition from which the predicted relationships were derived was statistically supported by only four characteristics of the sample couples.

# CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research project is to contribute to the understanding of marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta, by determining the extent of marital violence across selected socio-economic characteristics and examining the relationships between marital violence and these factors. Emphasis in this study has been on developing a comparison to Gelles's 1972 study of violent couples. In this chapter, the results are compared and discussed in relation to the hypotheses. Implications of this project and suggestions for further research are also presented.

### A. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The AAS data was analysed to determine the extent of marital violence. The analysis revealed several characteristics with high rates of any violence: young spouses (18 - 30 years) (30%), Very Frequent drinkers (29%), one-child families (26%), middle income households ($26,000 - 35,999) (26%), and commonlaw couples (27%). Overall, the rate of marital violence was 13% of the nonmetropolitan couples.

Most of the marital violence was wife abuse (67%). The highest levels of wife abuse generally corresponded with characteristics

associated with high levels of any violence, which were: one-child families (23.1%), those with religious differences (21.6%), very frequent drinkers (17.6%), young husbands (18 -30 years) (18%), and middle income households ($26,000 - 35,999) (20.6%). Wife abuse was the major form of marital violence across the selected characteristics.

Analysis of the relationships between the three measures of marital violence (any violence, frequent violence and wife abuse) and the selected factors produced seven significant relationships and some general trends. Marital violence was found to be directly related to three characteristics: alcohol consumption, husband's religious preference, and spousal differences in religious preference. Four of the seven significant relationships indicated an inverse association to age, wife's occupational status, household income and number of children in the family. For the remaining twelve characteristics, general trends were found between marital violence and the level of educational attainment, group membership, and inequalities of spousal age, educational level and occupational status. Therefore the data analysis indicates that alcohol consumption, religious preferences, age, occupational status, household income and family size are the strongest predictors of marital violence among the sample couples.

## B. COMPARISON TO GELLES'S PROPOSITION

Twelve hypotheses were drawn from Gelles's first proposition in his Social Structural Theory of Violence. His interviews with subjects drawn from social agency and police files led him to propose

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF RESULTANT RELATIONSHIPS

| Hypothesized Relationship to Marital Violence | Relationship Found |
|---|---|
| 1. Directly related to alcohol consumption. | Same |
| 2. Increases to middle age, the declines. | Inversely related |
| 3. Declines with level of education. | None |
| 4. Declines with occupational status. | Highest at ends, for wives. |
| 5. Declines with household income. | Same |
| 6. Highest if no religion, but does not differentiate Protestants from Catholics. | Same except differentiates Protestants from Catholics |
| 7. Decreases with group membership. | None |
| 8. Higher if the husband has less education than wife. | None |
| 9. Higher if the husband has lower occupational status than wife. | None |
| 10. Lower if wife is older than husband. | None |
| 11. Not related to number of children. | Inversely related |
| 12. Higher if partners have different religious preferences. | Same |

that marital violence is more likely to occur in families of lower socio-economic status or between couples with status inconsistencies. This differential distribution of marital violence is described in the first proposition in his Theory as "violence is a response to particular structural and situational stimuli" (Gelles, 1972, p. 188).

After comparing this project's results to the hypotheses derived from Gelles's proposition (see Table 6), only limited support was found for that proposition. This project found statistically significant relationships which supported four of Gelles's conclusions: that marital violence is directly related to alcohol consumption, to a lack of religious preference and to differences in religious preferences, and inversely related to household income. No support was provided for three hypotheses due to the contradicting relationships discovered in this study, which were between marital violence and age, education and the number of children. No significant relationships were found between marital violence and age differences, education differences, occupational status, occupational status differences, religious differences and social isolation. This project found support for only four of the twelve hypotheses derived from Gelles's first proposition.

The patterns of marital violence among nonmetropolitan Albertan couples had only a few similarities to those predicted by Gelles's first proposition. Since only four hypotheses were supported, three were contradicted and the rest were inconclusive, it can be concluded that Gelles's proposition had limited ability to predict the socio-economic characteristics related to marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta.

The reasons for the differing results may relate to methodological or ontological issues. The use of a more representative sample and a more reliable survey instrument in the All Alberta Study (AAS) may have decreased the sampling bias. By drawing his sample from police and agency files, Gelles may have confounded his results, that is, through an overemphasis on the lower socio-economic characteristics in violent couples. Due to small sample sizes in both this and Gelles's studies, more complex multivariate analysis techniques could not be used to reveal stronger associations between marital violence and the selected characteristics. Many of the socio-economic factors which Gelles used to formulate his theory may have been confounded by generational changes in occupation, education and income, ie. pre-war generations may have had limited access to education, occupation and thereby income opportunites. His conclusions about lower socio-economic couples being more prone to marital violence may be due to a sampling bias.

Gelles's proposition and the twelve hypotheses derived from his study have been unable to predict the patterns of marital violence. Marital violence was not found to be more common among couples with lower socio-structural and imbalanced intra-family structural situations, as Gelles predicted. Particular socio-economic categories did have higher rates of marital violence but this was not found to be consistently related to couples of lower socio-economic status.

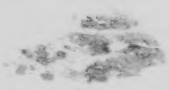
## C. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MARITAL VIOLENCE

Analysis of the 1987 AAS data indicates that the extent of marital violence is as high among nonmetropolitan couples in Alberta as Smith (1987) reported it in other areas of metropolitan Canada, and that most of the victims are women. More than one in every ten (13%) couples used physical violence in marital conflict. This is similar to the rates of violence reported by Straus et al. who considered these rates to be "extremely high" (1986, p. 474). Based on a population of 216,625 married couples in nonmetropolitan Alberta (Statistics Canada, 1986), this would mean that over 28,000 couples in nonmetropolitan Alberta were involved in some form of marital violence, and almost 12,000 (5.5%) were frequently violent. Most of the violence is directed at women and at a rate of 8.8% of the total nonmetropolitan couples, more than 19,000 wives were being battered. Even without consideration of the under-reporting of marital violence, the extent of marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta indicates a major social problem.

The results of this study suggest that seven socio-economic characteristics are significantly associated with marital violence. Cautious conclusions may be drawn as to the possible causal, resultant or symptomal nature of these relationships.

Marital violence was found to be directly related to the frequency and amount of alcohol consumption. If drinking has a causal relationship to the violence, it may be due to lowered inhibitions after drinking or due to arguments about the drinking itself. Or drinking may be a result of marital conflict and used as an





alternative coping mechanism to release frustration. The alcohol consumption may not be directly related to the violence but to another factor such as age, household income or occupational status. Alcohol consumption and marital violence are directly related although the nature of the relationship is unclear.

Marital violence was found to be inversely related to the age of the spouse. Young couples may be more prone to use physical violence to resolve conflict. The higher rate of violence may be due to young couples more stressful lives as they establish their marriages, jobs and families. The higher rate of violence may only be temporary as young violent couples either divorce or learn alternative conflict resolution techniques. Although age is strongly associated with marital violence, further research is needed to clarify the nature of this relationship.

Marital violence was shown to be related to women's occupational status, although this was not a linear relationship as marital violence was highest for women both in low and in high/professional occupational status categories. This may be explained if women in low status occupations have more stress, less job satisfaction and less income, and the women in high/professional occupations experience stress from the additional job responsibilities as well as wife-worker role conflicts. It is difficult to draw direct conclusions about the relationship between women's occupational status and marital violence.

The rate of marital violence decreased with higher household income levels. If this is a causal relationship, it would suggest that lower income couples may have more marital conflict due to more

financial difficulties, or that low income couples have less satisfaction from home and lifestyle comforts. Low income could also be seen as a symptom of other problems which lead to the marital violence. There is also the possiblity that higher income families may be using nonphysical means to resolve conflict. There are several possiblities which could explain the inverse relationship between marital violence and household income.

Marital violence was found to be highest among those with no religious preference, higher among Catholic men than Protestant men and directly related to differences in religious preferences between spouses. An explanation for this may be that those with no religion have a more nonconformist lifestyle, or have less clarity in their moral guidelines than do those report a religious preference. Religious differences may be a subject of conflict or lead to conflicting approaches to marriage, child-rearing or lifestyle issues. Possibly, religion may be one characteristic of many opposing factors between the spouses. There may be a cultural factor which influences the higher rate of violence among Catholic than Protestant men, rather than it being directly related to choice of religion. At this point, the nature of the relationship between marital violence and religious preference holds several possibilities for further study.

The incidence of marital violence decreased with the number of children in the family. This may be due to the existence of marital conflict acting as a limitor to family growth. Or the smaller family size may be due to the younger age of the couple, indicating that age is a more dominant factor than family size in predicting marital

violence. The nature of the relationship between marital violence and family size is unclear but it might be confounded by the spouse's age.

## D. POLICY AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The results of this project have implications for policy and attitudinal changes regarding marital violence. Social welfare and related government agencies may be advised of the extent of marital violence and the predominance among young couples, small families and those with low income or occupational status. These factors indicate a need to improve access to services for victims and their families in nonmetropolitan Alberta, to provide educational and counselling services to younger and poorer families, and to provide alternative services to couples who are older, more financially or professionally secure. Medical and mental health professionals could identify more victims of abuse especially if 'accidental' injuries occur in higher risk groups or in association with alcohol abuse. Education and public health agencies could provide conflict management and effective communication courses to young adults, low income couples and new families. Police and legal agencies could be more aware of alcohol abuse, age, income, family size and occupational characteristics of those involved in domestic violence for their affect on handling the dispute, laying charges and officer training. Policy, service and educational programs could be more effective through consideration of the socio-economic characteristics which this study revealed are most associated with marital violence.

This project challenges several widely accepted assumptions

(Finkelhor, 1983) about marital violence. The high levels of marital violence and wife abuse indicate that marital violence is not rare, rather it is a common practice, especially for couples in particular categories. The extent of violence among couples with high occupational status and educational attainment contradicts the assumption that 'blue-collar workers' are the only ones who resolve confict through physical means. The assumption that the importance of religion is declining in this secular society may be questioned if having a religious preference and having the same one as the spouse may contribute to less marital violence as shown by this project. The findings from this project contradict commonly held assumptions that marital violence is a rare occurance, or limited to lower socio-economic couples, and they indicate the influence of traditional moral principles on everyday behaviour.

## E. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Many suggestions for future research are directly related to this research project. Most of these suggestions could utilize the same or similar data source, but the topics which were outside the objectives set for this project, could build upon this project's findings. The results on the extent and patterns of marital violence in nonmetropolitan Alberta may be compared to the metropolitan respondents. The total Alberta sample could be examined using multivariate data analysis techniques to identify the predominant characteristics associated with marital violence. Alberta data could be compared to the 1985 U.S. National Study on Violence. The AAS data

could be examined to determine the effects of marital violence in Alberta. The socio-economic characteristics of the most common batterer, men, could be analysed for patterns which could impact education and treatment programs. Systematic collection of marital violence data in future All Alberta or Edmonton studies would allow longitudinal study of this social problem. Using the same or similar databases, future research could contribute to an understanding of marital violence in this province.

Still focussing on Alberta, a researcher could examine the social services, policies and legal issues of marital violence. A major project could undertake an assessment of the services and programs offered province-wide. Creative programs for rural areas could be identified and evaluated. Marital violence statistics could be monitored for possible changes as alcohol distribution becomes privatized. Finkelhor has suggested several other research opportunities which relate to this study, such as studying battered women in special populations, longitudinal studies of the development of male violence, and identification of what factors are related to the cessation of marital violence (1988).

Gelles states that "the fact of a physical assault having taken place is not sufficient for understanding violence. Several other dimensions also need to be considered" (Straus and Gelles, 1986, p. 476). To understand marital violence, one must consider the causes, effects and motivations of those involved. Many areas need be explored to contribute to an understanding of marital violence and toward elimination of this destructive human behaviour.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS FROM ALL ALBERTA STUDY 1987

26. a. In general, how often do you consume alcoholic beverages -- that is, beer, wine, or liquor -- never, less than 1 day a month, 1 to 3 days a month, 1 to 2 days a week, 3 to 4 days a week, 5 to 6 days a week, or daily?

    b. On a day when you do drink alcoholic beverages, on average, how many drinks do you have?

44. a. What is your current marital status?
    Single (never married), now married, common-law, divorced, separated or widowed.

    b. In the last year, were you living (with your spouse) (in a marriage-like relationship)?

45. No matter how well a couple gets along with one another, there are times when they disgree, and they may use many different ways of trying to settle their disagreements. For instance ...

    a. I would like you to tell me how many times in the last 12 months you ...

        1) threw something at your (spouse/partner).

        2) pushed, grabbed, or shoved your (spouse/partner).

        3) slapped your (spouse/partner).

        4) kicked, bit or hit your (spouse/partner).

5) hit or tried to hit your (spouse/partner).

6) beat your (spouse/partner).

7) choked your (spouse/partner).

8) threatened your (spouse/partner).

9) used a knife or fired a gun.

b. Thinking back over the last 12 months you've been together, tell me how many times your (former) (spouse/partner) ...

(same 9 items in same order)

51. Have you ever personally known a woman who has experienced wife abuse?

60. Are you presently working full time, part time, going to school, keeping house or something else (retired, unable to work)?

65. What kind of work (do/did) you normally do? That is, what (is/was) your job title?
(four digit Canada 1980 Standard Occupational Classification)

72. Is your spouse presently working full time, part time, going to school, keeping house or something else (retired, unable to work)?

74. What kind of work (does/did) your spouse normally do? That is, what is (his/her) job title? (same codes)

77. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? none, elementary, junior high, high school, non university or university --completed or incompleted.

The highest level of education completed by spouse. (same categories)

79. How many groups and organizatons do you belong to, including professional, union, recreational and church groups etc?

80. What is your religious preference?
(answer categories: no preference, 24 religions or other)

What is your spouse's religious preference? (same categories)

89. (From this list), would you tell me which number comes closest to the total income of all the members of this household for this past year before taxes and deductions?
(answer catergories: under $6000, 24 groups at $2000 increments, $75000 plus, and no answer)

APPENDIX B-1

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES - RECODING SCHEME

| PINEO-PORTER-MCROBERTS SOCIOECONOMIC CLASSIFICATON RECODES | PROJECT RECODES |
|---|---|
| Farm Labourers | Low Status |
| Unskilled Manual | " " |
| Unskilled Clerical Sales Service | " " |
| Semi-skilled Manual | " " |
| Semi-skilled Clerical Sales Service | " " |
| Farmers | Medium Status |
| Skilled Crafts Trades | " " |
| Skilled Clerical Sales Service | " " |
| Foremen/Women | " " |
| Supervisors | High Status |
| Middle Management | " " |
| Technicians | " " |
| Semi-professionals | " " |
| High Level Management | Professional/Management |
| Employed Professionals | " " |
| Self-employed Professionals | " " |

APPENDIX B-2

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE - RECODING SCHEME

| AAS RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE ANSWERS | PROJECT CATEGORIES |
|---|---|
| No Preference/affiliation | None |
| Roman Catholic | Catholic |
| Ukranian Catholic | " |
| Greek Orthodox | " |
| Anglican | Protestant and Others |
| Baptist | " |
| Lutheran | " |
| Mennonite | " |
| Latter Day Saints | " |
| Pentecostal | " |
| Presbyterian | " |
| United Church | " |
| Protestant or Christian unspecified | " |
| Other eastern religions | " |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | " |
| Reformed bodies | " |
| Salvation Army | " |
| Church of God | " |
| Seventh Day Adventist | " |
| Evangelical, Alliance, Other | " |

Note: None reported Jewish, Islam or Eastern Orthodox preferences.

APPENDIX C

TABLE C-1
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND FREQUENCY OF DRINKING

| Couple Group | NEVER N=71 | > 1/MO. N=36 | 1-2/MO. N=82 | 1-2/WK. N=49 | 3-4/WK. N=17 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nonviolent | 94.4% | 86.1% | 87.8% | 81.6 | 70.6% |
| Any Violence | 5.6 | 13.9 | 12.2 | 18.4 | 29.4 |
| Infrequent | 4.2 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 12.2 | 17.6 |
| Frequent | 1.4 | 8.3 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 11.8 |
| Wife Abuse | 5.6 | 5.5 | 8.5 | 12.2 | 17.6 |
| Know Abused Woman | 49.3 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 56.3 | 52.9 |

TABLE C-2
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND NUMBER OF DRINKS CONSUMED PER SESSION

| COUPLE GROUP | ONE N=38 | TWO N=74 | THREE N=29 | FOUR OR MORE N=114 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nonviolent | 97.4% | 87.8% | 75.9% | 86.0% |
| Any Violence | 2.6 | 12.2 | 24.1 | 14.0 |
| Infrequent | 2.6 | 5.4 | 10.3 | 9.6 |
| Frequent | 0 | 6.8 | 13.8 | 4.4 |
| Wife Abuse | 0 | 8.1 | 17.2 | 9.6 |
| Know Abused Woman | 42.1 | 48.6 | 62.1 | 50.9 |

TABLE C-3
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND AGE OF COUPLES

| COUPLE GROUP | 18-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=30 | N=17 | N=19 | N=11 |
| Nonviolent | 40% | 65% | 37% | 54% |
| Any Violence | 60 | 36 | 63 | 45 |
| Infrequent | 43 | 12 | 21 | 27 |
| Frequent | 17 | 24 | 42 | 18 |
| WIVES | N=34 | N=22 | N=17 | N=7 |
| Nonviolent | 47% | 45% | 35% | 57% |
| Any Violence | 53 | 54 | 65 | 43 |
| Infrequent | 38 | 18 | 24 | 29 |
| Frequent | 15 | 36 | 41 | 14 |

Source: Gelles, R. J., The Violent Home, 1972, p.122, adapted.

TABLE C-4
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND AGE OF COUPLES

| COUPLE GROUP | 17-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=50 | N=70 | N=49 | N=80 |
| Nonviolent | 70.0% | 85.7% | 91.8% | 97.5% |
| Any Violence | 30.0 | 14.3 | 8.2 | 2.5 |
| Infrequent | 16.0 | 10.0 | 4.1 | 2.5 |
| Frequent | 14.0 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 0 |
| Wife Abuse | 18.0 | 12.9 | 6.1 | 1.3 |
| Know Abused Woman | 22.0 | 62.5 | 60.0 | 13.9 |
| WIVES | N=74 | N=69 | N=40 | N=70 |
| Nonviolent | 71.6 | 91.3 | 92.5 | 95.7 |
| Any Violence | 28.4 | 8.7 | 7.5 | 4.3 |
| Infrequent | 16.2 | 4.3 | 5.0 | 2.9 |
| Frequent | 12.2 | 4.3 | 2.5 | 1.4 |
| Wife Abuse | 17.6 | 8.7 | 5.0 | 1.4 |
| Know Abused Woman | 75.7 | 67.6 | 68.0 | 35.1 |

TABLE C-5
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

| COUPLE GROUP | NONE-ELEM | SOME H.S. | H.S.GRAD | TECH, ETC | UNIV.+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=10 | N=25 | N=24 | N=16 | N=5 |
| Any Violence | 70% | 70% | 50% | 37% | 40% |
| Frequent | 30 | 40 | 21 | 10 | 19 |
| WIVES | N=11 | N=13 | N=41 | N=10 | N=5 |
| Any Violence | 55 | 63 | 55 | 40 | 80 |
| Frequent | 35 | 31 | 28 | 9 | 19 |

Adapted from Gelles The Violent Home, 1972, p. 122-123, adapted.

TABLE C-6
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

| COUPLE GROUP | NONE-ELEM | SOME H.S. | H.S. GRAD | TECH, ETC | UNIV.+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=12 | N=86 | N=57 | N=59 | N=30 |
| Nonviolent | 100% | 94% | 86.8% | 94.6% | 89.7% |
| Any Violence | 0 | 9.3 | 19.3 | 10.2 | 13.3 |
| Infrequent | 0 | 5.8 | 12.3 | 5.1 | 10.0 |
| Frequent | 0 | 3.7 | 8.0 | 5.4 | 3.7 |
| Wife Abuse | 0 | 7.0 | 12.3 | 6.8 | 13.3 |
| Know Abused Woman | 0 | 23.1 | 54.8 | 42.3 | 50.0 |
| WIVES | N=10 | N=82 | N=68 | N=70 | N=19 |
| Nonviolent | 90.0 | 89.0 | 88.2 | 85.7 | 84.2 |
| Any Violence | 10.0 | 11.0 | 11.8 | 14.3 | 15.8 |
| Infrequent | 0 | 6.1 | 7.4 | 10.0 | 10.5 |
| Frequent | 10.0 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 5.9 |
| Wife Abuse | 0 | 6.1 | 8.8 | 8.6 | 15.8 |
| Know Abused Woman | 50.0 | 52.9 | 62.1 | 69.2 | 75.0 |

TABLE C-7
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

| COUPLE GROUP | NO JOB | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH | PROF/MGR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=10 | N=21 | N=16 | N=21 | N=12 |
| Any Violence | 50% | 64% | 81% | 47% | 23% |
| Frequent | 30 | 39 | 27 | 24 | 8 |
| WIVES | N=46 | N=15 | N=2 | N=7 | N=10 |
| Any Violence | 53 | 70 | 48 | 42 | 60 |
| Frequent | 28 | 20 | 0 | 30 | 41 |

Adapted from Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 124, adapted.

TABLE C-8
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

| COUPLE GROUP | NO JOB | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH | PROF/MGR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HUSBANDS | N=12 | N=53 | N=94 | N=26 | N=25 |
| Nonviolent | 91.7% | 83.0% | 85.1% | 92.3% | 96.0% |
| Any Violence | 8.3 | 17.0 | 14.9 | 7.7 | 4.0 |
| Infrequent | 8.3 | 13.2 | 7.4 | 0 | 4.0 |
| Frequent | 0 | 3.8 | 7.4 | 7.7 | 0 |
| Wife Abuse | 8.3 | 13.2 | 9.6 | 7.7 | 4.0 |
| Know Abuse Woman | 33.3 | 28.6 | 32.1 | 60.0 | 50.0 |
| WIVES | N=97 | N=104 | N=49 | N=28 | N=15 |
| Nonviolent | 90.7% | 80.8 | 95.9 | 82.1 | 93.3 |
| Any Violence | 9.3 | 19.2 | 4.1 | 17.9 | 6.7 |
| Infrequent | 5.2 | 11.5 | 4.1 | 7.1 | 6.7 |
| Frequent | 4.1 | 7.7 | 0 | 10.7 | 0 |
| Wife Abuse | 4.1 | 11.5 | 4.1 | 14.3 | 6.7 |
| Know Abused Woman | 61.8 | 61.6 | 59.4 | 64.3 | 71.4 |

TABLE C-9
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME

| COUPLE GROUP | UNDER $3000 | $3000-4000 | $5000-6999 | $7000-9999 | $10000-14999 | $15000 & OVER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N=5 | N=13 | N=13 | N=17 | N=24 | N=8 |
| Any Violence | 80% | 60% | 70% | 55% | 48% | 38% |
| Frequent | 40 | 49 | 39 | 26 | 16 | 12 |

Adapted from Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 126, adapted.

TABLE C-10
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME

| COUPLE GROUP | UNDER $16000 | $16000-25999 | $26000-35999 | $36000-49999 | $50000-64999 | $65000 & OVER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N=26 | N=34 | N=34 | N=31 | N=40 | N=32 |
| Nonviolent | 92.3% | 79.4% | 73.5% | 90.3% | 90.0% | 93.8% |
| Any Violence | 7.7 | 20.6 | 26.5 | 9.7 | 10.0 | 6.3 |
| Infrequent | 0 | 14.7 | 14.7 | 9.7 | 7.5 | 0 |
| Frequent | 7.7 | 5.9 | 8.8 | 0 | 2.5 | 6.3 |
| Wife Abuse | 0 | 14.7 | 20.6 | 3.2 | 5.0 | 6.3 |
| Know Abused Woman | 38.5 | 55.9 | 61.8 | 54.8 | 47.5 | 62.5 |

TABLE C-11
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND'S RELIGION | | | WIFE'S RELIGION | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CATHOLIC | PROTESTANT | NONE | CATHOLIC | PROTESTANT | NONE |
| | N=37 | N=35 | N=7 | N=42 | N=32 | N=5 |
| Nonviolent | 49% | 48% | 14% | 43% | 56% | 0% |
| Any Violence | 51 | 52 | 86 | 57 | 43 | 100 |
| Infrequent * | 32 | 23 | 29 | 36 | 9 | 80 |
| Frequent ** | 19 | 29 | 57 | 21 | 34 | 20 |

* From once in marriage to six times a year
** From monthly to daily.

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 127, adapted.

TABLE C-12
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND'S RELIGION | | | WIFE'S RELIGION | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CATHOLIC | PROTESTANT | NONE | CATHOLIC | PROTESTANT | NONE |
| | N=55 | N=153 | N=32 | N=60 | N=169 | N=16 |
| Nonviolent | 85.1% | 92.2% | 78.1% | 88.3% | 88.8% | 81.3% |
| Any Violence | 14.5 | 7.8 | 21.9 | 11.7 | 11.2 | 18.8 |
| Infrequent | 9.1 | 5.9 | 9.4 | 5.0 | 7.7 | 12.5 |
| Frequent | 5.5 | 2.0 | 12.5 | 6.7 | 3.6 | 6.3 |
| Wife Abuse | 9.1 | 5.9 | 15.6 | 5.0 | 8.3 | 6.3 |
| Know Abused Woman | 36.8 | 38.7 | 39.1 | 87.5 | 60.4 | 59.4 |

TABLE C-13
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP

| COUPLE GROUP | NONE | ONE | TWO | THREE PLUS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MALE RESP. | N=28 | N=29 | N=25 | N=40 |
| Nonviolent | 89.3% | 86.2% | 80.0% | 87.5% |
| Any Violence | 10.7 | 13.8 | 20.0 | 12.5 |
| Infrequent | 3.6 | 6.9 | 12.0 | 5 |
| Frequent | 7.1 | 6.9 | 8.0 | 7.5 |
| Wife Abuse | 10.7 | 10.3 | 16.0 | 10.0 |
| Know Abused Woman | 32.1 | 27.6 | 28.0 | 57.9 |
| FEMALE RESP. | N=39 | N=44 | N=22 | N=28 |
| Nonviolent | 84.6 | 84.1 | 90.6 | 96.4 |
| Any Violence | 15.4 | 15.9 | 9.1 | 3.6 |
| Infrequent | 10.3 | 11.4 | 4.5 | 3.6 |
| Frequent | 5.1 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 0 |
| Wife Abuse | 7.7 | 4.5 | 9.1 | 3.6 |
| Know Abused Woman | 61.5 | 56.8 | 54.5 | 71.4 |

TABLE C-14
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND MORE EDUCATION | SAME LEVEL EDUCATION | WIFE MORE EDUCATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=35 | N=22 | N=23 |
| Nonviolent | 57% | 41% | 30% |
| Any Violence | 43 | 59 | 69 |
| Infrequent * | 20 | 27 | 43 |
| Frequent ** | 23 | 32 | 26 |

* From once in marriage to six times a year.
** From monthly to daily.

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 138, adapted.

TABLE C-15
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND MORE EDUCATION | SAME LEVEL EDUCATION | WIFE MORE EDUCATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=64 | N=116 | N=61 |
| Nonviolent | 87.5% | 89.7% | 86.9% |
| Any Violence | 12.5 | 10.3 | 13.1 |
| Infrequent | 9.4 | 6.0 | 8.2 |
| Frequent | 3.1 | 4.3 | 4.9 |
| Wife Abuse | 9.4 | 6.9 | 9.8 |
| Know Abused Woman | 50.0 | 47.4 | 52.5 |

TABLE C-16
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS DIFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND HIGHER OCCUP. STATUS | SAME | WIFE HIGHER OCCUP. STATUS |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=54 | N=5 | N=21 |
| Nonviolent | 48% | 40% | 38% |
| Any Violence | 52 | 60 | 62 |
| Infrequent * | 28 | 40 | 24 |
| Frequent ** | 24 | 20 | 38 |

* From once in a marriage to six times a year.
** From monthly to daily.

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 138, adapted.

TABLE C-17
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS DIFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND HIGHER OCCUP. STATUS | SAME | WIFE HIGHER OCCUP. STATUS |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=98 | N=95 | N=34 |
| Nonviolent | 89.8% | 87.4% | 85.3% |
| Any Violence | 10.2 | 12.6 | 14.7 |
| Infrequent | 5.1 | 8.4 | 11.8 |
| Frequent | 5.1 | 4.2 | 2.9 |
| Wife Abuse | 6.1 | 10.5 | 8.8 |
| Know Abused Woman | 52.0 | 46.3 | 61.8 |

TABLE C-18
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND DIFFERENCE IN AGE OF COUPLES

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND OLDER | SAME AGE | WIFE OLDER |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=48 | N=19 | N=13 |
| Nonviolent | 42% | 47% | 54% |
| Any Violence | 58 | 53 | 46 |
| Infrequent * | 31 | 32 | 15 |
| Frequent ** | 27 | 21 | 31 |

* From once in a marriage to six times a year.
** From monthly to daily.

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 138, adapted.

TABLE C-19
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND DIFFERENCE IN AGE OF COUPLES

| COUPLE GROUP | HUSBAND OLDER | SAME AGE | WIFE OLDER |
|---|---|---|---|
| | N=184 | N=31 | N=35 |
| Nonviolent | 85.9% | 90.3% | 91.4% |
| Any | 14.1 | 9.7 | 8.6 |
| Infrequent | 8.7 | 6.5 | 2.9 |
| Frequent | 5.4 | 3.2 | 5.7 |
| Wife Abuse | 10.9 | 3.2 | 2.9 |
| Know Abused Woman | 50.5 | 38.7 | 57.6 |

TABLE C-20
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN

| COUPLE GROUP | NUMBER OF CHILDREN | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | NONE TO 2 | 3 TO 4 | 5 OR MORE |
| | N=35 | N=31 | N=14 |
| Nonviolent | 43% | 45% | 50% |
| Any Violence | 57 | 54 | 50 |
| Infrequent * | 34 | 29 | 14 |
| Frequent ** | 23 | 26 | 36 |

* From once in a marriage to six times a year.
** From monthly to daily.

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 140, adapted.

TABLE C-21
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN

| COUPLE GROUP | NUMBER OF CHILDREN | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NONE | ONE | TWO | THREE + |
| | N=116 | N=53 | N=57 | N=29 |
| Nonviolent | 88.8% | 73.6% | 93.0% | 93.1% |
| Any Violence | 11.2 | 26.4 | 7.0 | 6.9 |
| Infrequent | 5.2 | 17.0 | 5.3 | 3.4 |
| Frequent | 6.0 | 9.4 | 1.8 | 3.4 |
| Wife Abuse | 8.7 | 23.1 | 5.7 | 3.4 |
| Know Abused Woman | 37.5 | 56.6 | 66.7 | 57.1 |

TABLE C-22
GELLES'S RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE | |
|---|---|---|
| | SAME RELIGION | DIFFERENT RELIGION |
| | N=50 | N=30 |
| Nonviolent | 52% | 33% |
| Any Violence | 48 | 67 |
| Infrequent | 30 | 27 |
| Frequent | 18 | 40 |

Source: Gelles, The Violent Home, 1972, p. 151, adapted.

TABLE C-23
PROJECT RESULTS
MARITAL VIOLENCE AND RELIGIOUS DEFFERENCE

| COUPLE GROUP | RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE | |
|---|---|---|
| | SAME RELIGION | DIFFERENT RELIGION |
| | N=186 | N=51 |
| Nonviolent | 91.9% | 78.4% |
| Any Violence | 8.1 | 21.6 |
| Infrequent | 5.4 | 13.7 |
| Frequent | 2.7 | 7.8 |
| Wife Abuse | 3.8 | 21.6 |
| Know Abused Woman | 47.8 | 56.9 |